HISTORY OF
ENGLISH NONCONFORMITY

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ENGLISH NONCONFORMITY

FROM WICLIF TO THE CLOSE OF THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY

HENRY W. CLARK

VOL. I

FROM WICLIF TO THE RESTORATION

NOTE

IT is probable that if a book's contents do not, of their own direct influence, constrain a reader to the point of view which the writer desires him to occupy (by which " point of view " is not meant a platform of agreement, but a point at which the *method* of survey becomes the same) no prefatory appeal will do it. Yet the present writer would scarcely be content if he left this one thing unsaid as to the book's underlying idea. What has been here attempted is not so much the discovery and presentation of fresh facts, but rather the bringing of recorded happenings into the light of one general principle to be estimated and judged. Even in regard to the events themselves, it is hoped that the particular method of arrangement may enable a reader to obtain a clearer view of both their consecution and their interdependence than that which frequently prevails. And it may be added, on this point, that although no originality of discovery is claimed, the writer has gone back to the sources, and, so far as possible, verified everything set down. If no new ways are opened up, the old ones have at any rate been carefully re-travelled. But the underlying idea is the testing of events as to their success or failure in manifesting a changeless spirit and ideal. And though this will (it is hoped) become clear enough as the reader progresses, a reader who fixes that fact in his mind at the start will be saved from presently finding his mental adjustment wrong.

I have endeavoured—though who can perfectly succeed?
—to be scrupulously fair. That I am on the side of the
Nonconformist spirit as against the Conformist is evident
enough. But I may possibly have found it the more easy
to be impartial towards the Conformist movements because
(as is also evident) I think that for the complete manifesta-
tion of the true Nonconformist spirit our religious life is
waiting still. In this as in many other things, there will
come a time when, because " that which is perfect is come,
that which is in part shall be done away."

The " Authorities " given at the head of each section do
not, of course, make anything like an exhaustive list.
Certainly they do not represent anything like the number
of authorities consulted in the preparation of the book. They
are merely the books, old and recent, to which a student
would do well, immediately and in the first instance, to
betake himself if he desires fuller information concerning the
events which are only summarised here. After he has
acquainted himself with these, there remains for his vessel
the open sea of historical literature, whereon the valuable
bibliographies in the " Cambridge Modern History " will
teach him many of the most promising routes.

The second volume, which will follow as soon as may
be, will, it is hoped, complete the story to the nineteenth
century's end.

My best thanks are due to Mr. Lewis Melville for
kindly reading the proofs.

HENRY W. CLARK.

HARPENDEN, HERTS,
    May 1911.

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INTRODUCTION

THE NONCONFORMIST SPIRIT

I

THIS book is concerned, as its title indicates, with concrete Nonconformity, with the actual Nonconformist movements whereof history has to tell. But historic Nonconformity is not necessarily—is not, it may as well be said at once, actually—a perfect manifestation of the Nonconformist spirit. Every movement, be it in the realm of politics, or in that of sociology, or in that of religion, is but the partial expression of a spirit or a force which, if it had its way unhindered, would drive the movement further than it actually reaches, preserve to the movement some elements which in actual working are but half accentuated or perhaps wholly lost, safeguard the movement from alien intrusions which creep into the actual drama as it is played out on history's stage. It is as though every spirit, so soon as it seeks to transfer itself from the region of abstract being to the region of embodiment and application and reality, finds that something of its purity is lost, that its singleness of being, so to call it, is somewhat impaired—partly because the existing circumstances, into the midst of which the new spirit is projected, compel a compromise between the new spirit and themselves, and partly because the new spirit is but imperfectly understood even by the men whom it sways. The new spirit enters the world, seizes hold upon the world and endeavours to realise itself there ; but the world in its turn seizes hold upon the new spirit, wrests it as it were out of its original shape, and insists that the adjustment between the world and the new spirit shall be made from both sides and not

alone from one.   In the end, no historical movement is an unadulterated product of the spirit to which it mainly owes its birth ; and of the Nonconformist movements recorded in the history of our land, no less than of all others, does this saying hold good.

But precisely for this reason, the most profitable study of any historic movement is carried through only when we pass behind the mere recorded facts of it, reach the force or principle or spirit or eternal tendency which in the recorded facts has more or less incarnated itself and taken upon itself form and vesture, and find out the degree wherein the " more " or the " less " applies.   The knowledge of bald facts is of course valuable in many ways ; and it is with the knowledge of bald facts that all historical study must of course commence. But if we are to know the exact value of the facts—if we are to form a judgment concerning any defined succession of historical incident—if we are to know just what it accomplished and just what it failed to accomplish for the well-being of mankind and to deduce some lesson from the whole—if, in short, we are to estimate its real significance— we must seek to discover not only what happened, but what was the spirit under whose initial inspiration the happening took place.   The greatest service which our study of any particular line of incidents can do us is to indicate the relation between the incidents and an ideal which the incidents do not embody, but which they nevertheless suggest.   The supreme lesson of history is reached, not only through a study of the events which actually occurred, though such a study has its own lesson to teach.   It is reached by a consideration of the greater or smaller degree in which concrete events reflected an eternal and changeless spirit.   Only in this way is the ultimate lesson of the past to the present ascertained.   Yet in this way that ultimate lesson is ascertained of a truth ; for in this way may we learn how better to submit ourselves to the dominance of the eternal and changeless spirit to-day.   We cannot appraise any historical movement without viewing it as the embodi-ment of something behind the mere outward facts ; and— let it be said once more—of the Nonconformist movements recorded in the history of our land, no less than of all others,

does this saying hold good. In order to understand concrete
Nonconformist history, its intrinsic work and its suggestions
to our own time, we must understand what the Nonconformist
spirit—which concrete Nonconformist history only imperfectly
reveals—what the Nonconformist spirit really is.

2

The Nonconformist spirit is, in succinct summary, the
spirit which exalts life above organisation. More than that,
it is the spirit which holds that life should *make* organisation,
and that organisation is at least greatly reduced in value
(sometimes even valueless, sometimes even actually harmful)
unless it be thus the direct product of life. That all religious
organisation finds its ultimate aim and object in the develop-
ment of religious life is, of course, a doctrine common to all
religious men ; and in this sense life is exalted above
organisation by all serious thinkers upon the theme. But it
is when we strengthen the statement to the pitch of declaring
that life should *make* organisation that we come upon the
crucial dividing line. For with one school of thought—the
Conformist, the more distinctly ecclesiastical—it is with
organisation that thought about the matter begins : the
organisation is looked upon as the power-house, the manu-
factory in which the forces which make the life reside and
out of which they issue ; so that the primary duty of the
religious man is to conform himself to, to become a member
of, the organisation, in order that he may obtain the needed
action upon life. Life is the ultimate aim, certainly ; but in
the actual construction of things, organisation stands first ;
and the idea which the candidate for life must first of all
impress upon his mind is the idea that in linking himself
with the organisation life is secured. The causal connection
between the given organisation and the desired life he must
at the outset take for granted, or must believe in on the
strength of arguments presented to his mind. He moves
into life *indirectly* : the organisation is the gate through
which he must pass ; and, although *intrinsically* life is more
important, yet the organisation is the immediately imminent
matter and in this way is exalted above life. The con-

ception in the forefront of this reading of things is that
organisation makes life.   With the other school of thought
—the Nonconformist—the starting-point is different.   The
Nonconformist spirit begins, not with the construction of an
organisation which, on theoretical or argumentative con-
siderations, is held to be the one necessary for the production
of life, but further down and further back.   Whatever organisa-
tion comes into existence must be the already existing life
weaving for itself an outward and visible dress : it must be
the natural and automatic producing, by the existing life, of
a system which that existing life finds necessary and helpful
for its own health, and which, precisely because it is thus
produced by life, becomes, one must not say the producer,
but the deepener and intensifier, of life in its turn : the whole
process must be like that of a primary life-germ fashioning
for itself its own members and its own physical frame which,
once fashioned, are to react upon and help in maintaining
the life out of which they came.   So the primary duty of
the religious man, on this view, is not to conform to what-
ever religious organisation he finds already occupying the
field, but to secure for himself the presence and energising
power of a religious life, and thereafter to let that work
itself out into an organisation which shall be at the same
time the life's product and the life's new inspiration.   He
will find, of course (for whatever theoretical objections might
be taken on this score, in practice the thing does not work
out to a mere individualism wherein all organisation and
ecclesiasticism is lost)—he will find that as life works itself
out into organisation in his own particular case, he ranges
alongside of many others in whom life is doing the same.
But it is in the idea of life that he is immersed.   He does
not begin with organisation : he comes to it—comes to it
inevitably, but still as to a thing second both in importance
and in time.   This is the Nonconformist spirit—the spirit
which does not begin by looking outward for something to
which it may cling, but which flies at once to the innermost
place, sets the spiritual processes going there, and then lets
the outward things determine themselves as they may.
Organisation has no primary value in its eyes, but only a
derived.   The Nonconformist spirit stands, not, as the too

exclusively negative character of its title might be taken to imply, for a *refusal* to conform (though under the stress of faithfulness to its own principle it may be and has been driven to this), but for a refusal to make conformity the first care. If it sees no virtue in the mere *attitude* of conformity, it is not that it sees any in the mere *attitude* of non-conformity either. It is not its attitude, either of accept-ance or rejection, to any organisation, that it troubles about most. It puts the whole question of organisation into an inferior place. Life is the all-important, the initial and generative thing. The Nonconformist spirit exalts life above organisation, not only as being a matter of greater intrinsic importance (as to that all would be agreed), but as being the matter of more immediate practical interest and concern, and declares that the second must be the auto-matically wrought product of the first.

3

The tendency to subordinate life to organisation—the necessity thus arising for the protest of the Nonconformist spirit, with its subordination of organisation to life—comes into play in religious history because in connection with religion there must be *both* organisation and life, and because organisation, the more concrete thing of the two, is apt to win more than its due proportion of care. It is always the tangible, the visible, the sounding, that which makes a sensible appeal, that chiefly interests the masses of men : it is easier, too, to fulfil religious conditions when they are summed up in such programmes as attachment to an organisation implies than when they deal with more abstract things ; and religious men are apt, therefore, to press further and further away from the centre where the impalpable and (as ordinary judgment might hold them) the vaguer forces work, and to travel only upon the circumference line which organisation so plainly traces out. Moreover, it is by the definiteness of organisation, by the clang of its machinery, by the vividness of the picturesque appeals which organisa-tion has it in its power to make, that religion is able most easily and most swiftly to bring pressure upon the non-

religious world ; so that, under the impulse of a motive entirely praiseworthy in itself, the tendency to an over-valuing of organisation once more gains strength. At any rate the tendency—human nature being what it is—is always there. And for this reason it is always as a protesting and corrective influence that the Nonconformist spirit appears. It must always be like one who, having been pushed from his territory, is seeking to recover his rights. The attitude of aggressiveness, of dispute, of reproof, almost of hostility, is thrust upon it by the circumstances of the case. This does not mean, however, that there was any inevitable abstract necessity for the conflicts between Church and Church by which the Nonconformist spirit has, as a matter of history, won its opportunities of manifesting itself and established its right to stake out its own particular ground. The Nonconformist spirit must, indeed, always be protesting, corrective, when it comes ; but, were the Church possessed of an adequate and genuine sensitiveness throughout, and able in that sensitiveness to gauge its own condition properly as it should, the coming of the Nonconformist spirit would be the whole Church correcting itself, not one part of the Church correcting another : it would mean that the whole Church, finding the tendency to undue exaltation of organisa-tion over life pushing it too strongly down the slope, had pulled itself up and swung round upon the line of the Non-conformist spirit again. That needs to be said, lest emphasis upon the protesting and corrective character of the Noncon-formist spirit should seem to imply that the religious world is handed over, helpless, to an inevitable internecine war. But the statement being guarded thus, it may be repeated that it is always against opposition—against opposition born out of a tendency inherent in man's nature—that the Non-conformist spirit, when it appears, has to make its way. The natural tendency is to an undue exaltation of organisa-tion over life ; and it is this tendency that calls the Non-conformist spirit, with its counteracting exaltation of life over organisation, into the field.

4

In the characterisation of the Nonconformist spirit which has been given there are implied two or three things at which it may be well to glance. It should be borne in mind, first of all, that the Nonconformist spirit, as described, is a very positive thing. It exalts life above organisation : it holds that organisation should be made by life. That is, the Nonconformist spirit is much more than a mere protest against exaggerations or suppressions or distortions of doctrine ; nor is it necessarily manifested when a party secedes from an existing organisation on the ground that something in the organisation calls for reform, and that the seceders have tried to press the reform in vain. Such a secession may be inspired by no comprehension whatever of the true Nonconformist principle ; and the setting up of a rival organisation may only mean that those who call it into being would, if they could, create another " norm " or standard whereto religious life and practice should conform. The Nonconformity which, if things were different, would find conformity commendable *per se*, is not the product of the Nonconformist spirit rightly understood. It must be re-membered that it is a removal of stress and emphasis quite away from the question of conformity or nonconformity on which the Nonconformist spirit insists, and the beginning of a positive and constructive work from a wholly different starting-point. Whatever new religious body may come into existence as a consequence of differences of opinion upon some points of doctrine and ecclesiastical order is not necessarily a Nonconformist body in the strict sense of the word. Externally, of course, it becomes Nonconformist by force of circumstances ; but its Nonconformity may be no more than superficial ; and before we can decide whether it is only this or something more, deeper questions have to be faced. As a matter of history, Nonconformist bodies have come into being, time and time again, under the simply negative and protesting impulse (whether justifiably or not does not for the moment matter) ; and this fact has provided a fruitful text, and perhaps some shadow of excuse, for those

who are always asserting that Nonconformity stands for
" schism " and " dissent." Yet the last-mentioned word,
when used as a designation for Nonconformity, is singularly
misleading, since its connotation is purely negative, and since
it appears to suggest that the only thing a man need do, in
order to become a Nonconformist, is to go out at the doors
of the existing Church and, shaking the dust from off his
feet, turn his back upon that Church for good. Nothing, if
our description of the Nonconformist spirit be correct, could
be further from the truth. Even the term " Nonconformity,"
though preferable to " Dissent," is somewhat too negative.
Still, a more positive idea may be found in it if we come to
it along a certain line. If, for instance, we imagine a Non-
conformist asked, " What do you take to be the essential
thing in the making of a Church attachment and the creation
of a Christian community ? " and hear him answering, " *Not*
conformity," we are driven at once to see that he has an
alternative to conformity—a positive of some sort—in
reserve. He is a " Nonconformist " in that *not* conformity,
but something else, is his guiding idea. The term at any
rate demands, if it does not suggest, an affirmation as a
correlative to the denial it makes. And the " positive " is
the principle which we have formulated—the principle that
organisation must be made by life. The Nonconformist
spirit—as both its opponents and many of those who claim
to be its friends often need to be reminded—is a very definite
and positive thing. It has its affirmations, and does not
simply object. The mere sheering off on some question of
doctrine or order by no means proves that the Nonconformist
spirit has been at work. The " dissent " may, in any
particular instance, be justifiable enough in itself ; but it
may only mean that if the established order of things were
different, the order would for its own sake be approved.
The true Nonconformist spirit goes deeper than this—stands
for an unchanging and very positive principle, and demands
that all things shall be brought under its sway.

It is also to be noted that toleration is implicit in the
Nonconformist spirit, whether or no it be manifested in given
instances by those who bear the Nonconformist name. In
the history of concrete Nonconformity it has, confessedly, not

always been so manifested ; and yet, if life is to make organisa-
tion, no one organisation (using the term to denote the entire
machinery, ecclesiastical and doctrinal, which a Church sets
up) is entitled to assume authority over, or to pronounce
sentence upon, the rest. If the thing were to be worked the
other way round, and organisation were to make life, then it
might be possible, and even right, for men of larger know-
ledge to prescribe for others the organisation with which they
must identify themselves and of which, for spiritual purposes,
they must make use ; for a product mechanically wrought
out is wrought by machinery built for the special purpose of
creating that product, and by machinery built to a definite
plan ; and precisely in proportion to the highly specialised
character of the desired product must the machinery show no
variation of design. Did organisation make life, then in the
religious sphere there would be but one possible Church, with
but one possible ecclesiastical order and one possible catena
of doctrines ; and that Church would find its patent rights
vindicated by the fact that, whenever order and doctrine were
rightly used, life was made. But if organisation be, as the
Nonconformist spirit declares, a growth from an antecedent
life—or, to change the figure, life weaving its own dress—
then no authoritative prophecy can be given as to what the
resulting organisation will be : no one organisation that comes
into being has any right to claim finality or a monopoly of
room ; nor can the adherents of any one organisation set
themselves up as the autocrats of the religious world. The
less highly, or more flexibly, organised Churches have not
always been tolerant, it is true. But they have always been
nearer to toleration than those more elaborate or more un-
bending in their system ; and this has been no mere accident
of the situation. When we start from life, we are starting
from something that is individual and special in each case :
life in different men (and this is as true of religious life, of
the life born in man's soul through his relation with God, as
it is of life in the more ordinary sense) will, or at any rate
may, express itself differently, make for itself "bodies" of
varying shape, call for sustenance of different kinds ; and the
man who starts from life in the making of his own Church
must in all consistency, since he claims that in himself life

is to have its way, permit the same liberty to all the rest. The Nonconformist spirit stands, in a sense, for an individualism of the most pronounced kind. The qualification previously set down must, it is true, be borne in mind. He who goes on the lines of the Nonconformist spirit will find that as life works itself out into organisation in his own particular case, he ranges alongside of many others in whom life is doing the same, and that thus individualism brings about community, brotherhood, a veritable religious association, a Church, with all the advantages of these things, once again. The Nonconformist spirit reaches association by the way of growth, instead of by the way of initial artificial manufacture, and so, indeed, provides for the only really vital association there can be. But, just because it is in this way that, under the leading of the Nonconformist spirit, association is reached there can be no right claim to a monopoly set up by any one association as against others, no attempt at suppression, not even any self-righteous assertion of superior spiritual grace. Controversy and discussion as to which organisation is most in harmony with the natural working out of religious life, and which organisation is most likely to react profitably upon religious life again, of course there may be ; and the Nonconformist spirit is (also of course) entitled to press its case upon the attention of those unconvinced ; but in the final resort there can be no compulsion, and every individual, and every group of individuals, must be allowed to vote as they choose and to take the consequent way. However in concrete instances Nonconformity may have failed to realise it, the Nonconformist principle (that life makes organisation) carries the other principle (the principle of toleration) implicit in its very terms.

One other point must be set down. The Nonconformist spirit (and in this matter the essential requirements of that spirit and the programmes of concrete Nonconformity have generally, though not quite always, been at one)—the Nonconformist spirit must be adverse to a " State establishment " of religion in the ordinary sense. True, it has been implied, in all that has been said concerning the Nonconformist spirit, that to take adherence to the State Church as the one proof of " Conformity," and aloofness from the State Church as the

one characteristic of " Nonconformity," is to adopt a quite mistaken, certainly a far too limited, view. And this may be a convenient place to say that where a State Church exists, the meaning of Nonconformity is specially likely to be mis-construed. Its significance is apt to be taken as exhausted in mere opposition to the idea of the existing State Church. The very fact that one particular Church is "established" tends to make that one particular Church the " standard," quite apart from considerations of a distinctly religious or spiritual kind ; and to be outside that Church is, indisputably, and in a very obvious sense, not to " conform." It is certainly to stand aloof from one department of national self-expression— or of what claims to be such. But this usage of the term " Nonconformity " does not, on our reading of its meaning, cover the ground. And in the absence of an " established " Church, the true line of division between " Conformity " and " Nonconformity " would be more clearly perceived : the essence of the matter would be disengaged from its accidents, and the line be drawn where its course ought to run. There might then be recognised, not only one Church, but a group of Churches, wherein the ecclesiasticism which makes life depend largely upon organisation prevails—and these (though the actual name might not be used) would be the Churches built upon the " Conformist " idea. Over against them, making the " Nonconformist " Churches (though, again, the name might have given place to another) would be the group in which organisation is looked upon as having value only as it is the product of life. As things are, the issue is clouded, and one has to be reminded that *mere* severance from the State Church does not of itself make Nonconformity in the full and true sense of the word. The presence of the Estab-lishment it is which causes one element of Nonconformity to be so often mistaken for the whole.

Yet one element it assuredly is. If the significance of Nonconformity is not exhausted in opposition to the idea of a State establishment of religion, it most certainly includes it. For anything like the assumption of State authority over religion—anything like the taking over of religion by the State as one of its departments—anything like the construc-tion of an ecclesiastical system, or the official sanction of a

doctrinal system, by the State as such—is, for the Non-conformist spirit, a violation of the idea that life cannot be made by organisation, but that organisation must be produced by life. For such "establishment" begins the whole thing from the outside, not from within. In an establishment of religion, and in the religious arrangements and organisings involved therein, the State can but make an artificial presentation of certain results which (according to the Nonconformist theory) might have value if they were pro-duced at religion's own initiative, but which otherwise have little or none. The carrying out of religious ordinances, the practice of religious worship, the setting up and working of religious and ecclesiastical machinery, on the part of the State, simply mean that the State is acting *as if religion were present*, but does nothing to ensure that it is. In other words, "establishment" artificially creates the consequences without creating, or being able to create, the one cause from which the consequences can legitimately flow, and takes the initiative out of religion's hands. And whatever may be said by way of partial justification of this, it can scarcely be disputed that the case is so. In all other things, the State discharges functions which are, so to say, natural to itself, the expression of its own inherent and essential idea. The State must have its governmental machineries, its executives, its legal and other departments—for these, with the cognate things, are precisely what the "State" means. When men say the "State," it is just these things they have in mind. These are the natural and inevitable functions of the State as such ; and in its control and ordering of these things the State represents the nation, acts on the nation's behalf. The very word "State" carries all these things within it ; so that to say that the State does these things is merely, as it were, to say that the organism breathes. But with the religious department this does not hold good. A State is not necessarily religious, for the simple reason that its component members are not necessarily religious. For the State to "establish" religion, therefore, is to begin at the wrong end, to make a shadow when the existence of the substance is not assured, to create some of the external consequences of religion without making certain that the

legitimising cause is there. The Nonconformist spirit would
not deny, of course, that the existence of these " externals "
may have some actual religious reaction upon individual
men. Nor would it deny that there is a possible and proper
recognition of religion by the State as such. That recogni-
tion may take many forms, and exist in many degrees. The
State may, for instance, at many of its public and official
gatherings, quite rightly enter upon them with worship and
praise and prayer. This is " recognition " in one of its most
elementary forms. And far up on the heights may be
discerned an ideal condition of things when the State shall
be religious through and through—religiously motived,
religiously guided, not in one department, but in all, even in
those that seem most secular—because all its members are
religious men. But this would be a very different thing
from " establishment " in the common sense : it would mean,
in fact, that religion has become " established " because the
Nonconformist spirit was having its unhindered way. It
would mean, not that the State had adopted religion, but
that religion had captured the State. From the point of
view of the Nonconformist principle, the verdict must be
that a State establishment of religion, in the ordinary sense,
usurps religion's function, makes an imitation religious result,
produces something like what religion would produce *if it
were there*. It takes the initiative out of religion's hands,
and by so doing contradicts the principle that organisation
must be made by life.

5

In undertaking a study of concrete Nonconformist
history, it is not intended, however, to prove or suggest that
in this concrete history the Nonconformist spirit comes to
perfect self-revelation : indeed, it was said at the outset that
in actual Nonconformist history no such perfect revelation
of the Nonconformist spirit is given. It is not possible—
as a pre-judgment—to rail off the Nonconformist movements
recorded on history's page, and to declare of what is con-
tained within the barriers " *This* is Nonconformity, the whole
of Nonconformity, and nothing but Nonconformity," or to
claim that Nonconformist reality is the exact image and

incarnation of the Nonconformist ideal. The question must at least be taken as open ; and in point of fact one of the principal objects in undertaking the historical study is to ascertain to what extent such harmony has been there. What we have to do is to look upon the Nonconformist spirit as a spirit which has always been seeking for embodiment—moving, so to say, round and round the outskirts of the existing religious world and endeavouring to find some point of entrance—making signals now and again to see whether any one will hoist an answering signal and then come forth to follow its leading and to take its vows. And the questions to which we have to address ourselves run thus—Where and when did the Nonconformist spirit find or make an open gate ? When it entered, did it, as it took shape in the thoughts and words and deeds of men, maintain itself undeflected and unflawed, or did it become in any wise distorted from its straightness and reduced from its first purity to inferior grade ? Did its voice grow muffled or indistinct under the human voices that took up its message ? Did those who heard its call hear clearly, and did those who accepted its pledges understand ? And, if at first they did, did the stream of their faithfulness flow on unalloyed, or did other waters become mingled with it as time went on ? The impartial historian, in facing enquiries like these, will make no antecedent assumption as to the extent to which concrete Nonconformity embodies the Nonconformist spirit : it will be, rather, in order to arrive at some measurement of that extent that he will devote himself to his task.

Such antecedent presumption as exists, in fact, makes it probable that the Nonconformist ideal, like other ideals, has suffered loss in process of its translation into the real. As has been said, every spirit, so soon as it seeks to transfer itself from the region of abstract being to the region of embodiment and application and reality, does suffer loss, partly because the existing circumstances compel something of compromise, and partly because the new spirit is but imperfectly understood even by those who acknowledge its sway. It is always in an earthen vessel that the treasure is enshrined. And, after what has been set down concerning the characteristics of the Nonconformist spirit and its

embodiment, these general considerations are likely to hold good.

Incidentally, it is worth notice that the Nonconformist spirit, being what it is may find a lodgment quite outside the ranks of what is usually and strictly termed Non-conformity, and make its appearance within the Established Church itself. The Nonconformist spirit exalts life over organisation. But even within an ecclesiastical system built upon a quite other principle than this there may be minds glancing towards the principle, to some extent feeling its magnetism, and attempting to make some sort of recon-ciliation (at any rate in their own thought) between it and the system to which they belong : there may be minds, also, moving in vague restlessness under the sense of some-thing lacking, which a later investigator may perceive to have been pressed upon, though uncomprehending, by the Nonconformist ideal ; and of these the historian who treats of a changeless spirit seeking for its opportunity will say that the Nonconformist spirit has touched them, notwith-standing that no move in the direction of severance is made. Moreover, some of the implications of the Nonconformist spirit may be recognised—on their own account, as it were— apart from any recognition of the Nonconformist spirit itself, and apart from any raising of the Nonconformist question : they may, for some minds, be perceived detached from their ground, and yet found to be in themselves praiseworthy and right. The idea of toleration, for example, though its ultimate justification, as between Church and Church, lies in the assertion of the Nonconformist principle that organisa-tion must be made by life, has made its home not only in the Nonconformist Churches, but elsewhere—and was in fact slow to make good its foothold among the Noncon-formist bodies themselves. Yet the historian who treats of a changeless spirit seeking for its opportunity will say that it was out of the pressure and influence of the Non-conformist spirit it came, however unrecognised its source might be. The Nonconformist spirit, like any other formative spirit that presses for embodiment, often produces a movement, half-instinctive and only half understood— perhaps not even half understood—in quarters where any

distinctive formulation of the Nonconformist ideal would be repudiated and thrust aside. And such considerations as these are not without their point ; for they carry the conclusion that now and then, at any rate, as history has passed onward, concrete Nonconformity may have had something to learn, as to its own right content, from those outside the Nonconformist ranks ; and they bid us, in the process of our study, keep open eyes to discern whether and where this has been. But the point as to a possible manifestation of the Nonconformist spirit, or of some of its implications, outside the Nonconformist borders, though it calls for notice as we pass by, is nevertheless merely incidental. It is, of course, among the Nonconformist bodies commonly so called that apprehension of the Nonconformist theory has been clearest, that definite formulations of it have been made with more or less fulness, and that its imperative has been most strongly felt ; and it need hardly be said, therefore, that it is the Nonconformist bodies commonly so called which have, as a matter of historical fact, come nearest to being an embodiment of the Nonconformist spirit and ideal.

But, reverting to the extent to which that embodiment has been carried, there are considerations which compel the student to come to it at least with an open mind. For one thing, a genuine Nonconformist Church, a Church which begins as such, may after a while turn to lay too much stress upon the organisation it has itself developed, and so, relaxing its grip upon its own original idea, come to be to some extent only superficially Nonconformist after all. We have remarked that with religion everywhere, *both* life and organisation are necessary, and that organisation, the more concrete thing of the two, is apt to obtain more than its due proportion of care. And it is at any rate a possible thing that a Church, having founded itself upon the principle that life must make organisation, should, as the organisation grows, forget the subordination in which the latter is to be kept, and thrust it unduly to the front. A building set upon the true foundation, and commenced with gold and silver and precious stones, may after a time suffer deterioration from the wood and hay and stubble which the builders

permit themselves to take into their hands. There is
always need for self-examination on the part of a Church
which claims the Nonconformist name : there may some-
times be a call for renewed protest, in favour of the
Nonconformist principle, from within Nonconformity itself.
Moreover, they who are swayed by the influence of the
Nonconformist spirit may not always interpret aright the
spirit which has touched them : it may have had to send
its current so far before it could reach them, and to send it,
as it were, through so alien an ether, that by the time it
impinges upon them it has lost much of its distinctive
power : its language may have been translated and re-
translated in process of becoming embodied in a speech
they can comprehend till the accents have got shifted and
the fulness of meaning is gone ; and they may, in con-
sequence of all this, take hold of the wrong point, mingle
some irrelevant or even inconsistent promptings of their own
minds with the promptings which the Nonconformist ideal
inspires. Always, too, there is danger that some who have
nothing of the genuine Nonconformist spirit should, for
reasons of their own, ally themselves with concrete Non-
conformity and impair the purity of its witness, perhaps
causing it to misunderstand itself, spreading mists upon the
pathway of its feet so that it stumbles and turns aside from
the track. It must be remembered, besides, that the holding
of certain doctrinal opinions, though nothing of the Non-
conformist idea, strictly speaking, may be involved in them,
may lead to the secession of a party from the Established
Church ; and in this way there may be an accession to the
ranks of concrete Nonconformity quite apart from any
working of the true Nonconformist spirit. And, once
again, in the case of any spirit or any ideal which demands
(as the Nonconformist spirit and ideal must sometimes
demand) that in order to a faithful service of it there shall
be severance from an existing order, one has to reckon
with the possibility of a mere faddism putting forth a claim
to represent that spirit or ideal and to be its consecrated
and faithful priest. What is nothing more than a fidgety
particularism, an excitable idiosyncrasy, may, so to say, ape
the manner and gait of a large principle, and having

intruded its unauthorised presence within the boundaries of that principle's estate, remain upon it unrecognised and unchallenged for long.

It is not asserted that all or any of these things have taken place. It has been said, indeed, that historic Nonconformity will not be found a perfect manifestation of the Nonconformist spirit ; but that is in the nature of things, since every spirit suffers somewhat from the world into which it comes. In regard to the particular points just set out, it is only said that they will suggest themselves for antecedent possibilities to the student's mind as he enters the historical way, and that he will therefore have further reason for avoiding the assumption of any absolute harmony between concrete Nonconformity and the Nonconformist ideal. It is the extent of that harmony that he will set himself to ascertain. What our whole study of the Nonconformist spirit and its implications suggests for our treatment of historic Nonconformity is simply this—that we are to investigate historic Nonconformity in its relation to the spirit which would make all organisation the offspring of life, and to consider, in regard to each incident of the historic process, not alone what it is in itself, but how far it genuinely manifests that spirit and assists it to win its way. Not that, in many instances, a decision on this point which commends itself to all can be arrived at ; for the suggested judgment is of a kind which permits of a verdict in various degrees of affirmation or the reverse. But it is with such a judgment in view that the materials are to be handled and the facts set down ; and at least a suggestion as to the decision may sometimes be made. Behind the concrete happenings we are to see the ideal—as it were looking over the shoulder of the happenings with the smile of approval or the frown of criticism, or the look that mingles both approval and criticism, upon its face. And it should be added that, while in this way we at the same time discern the isolated facts of history more clearly and bestow upon them an added worth for our minds, our judgment of the isolated facts, also, will grow both more generous and more just. For on all occasions of conflict, whenever we see Church ranged against Church, one order at grips with

another, we shall be prepared to believe (at any rate we shall not foreclose that question in a negative sense) that the side which has most of right need not necessarily have perfect right, nor the side which has most of error have utter wrong. We shall be just in all demanded criticism of what appeals to us the most, generous in all permissible appreciation of what appeals to us the least. The facts of history obtain at our hands a treatment which at the same time surveys them dispassionately and presses from them their full significance, when it is our interest, not to make out a case for this combatant or that, but to discover how much service or dis-service has been rendered to an eternal ideal, whether by its friends or its foes.

BOOK I

THE NONCONFORMIST SPIRIT BEFORE NONCONFORMITY

CHAPTER I

SECTION 1

Wicliffism and the Nonconformist Principle

NEARLY two hundred years before the birth of anything like
organised Nonconformity in the accepted modern sense of
the term, the Nonconformist spirit made a sudden, and
almost dramatic, appearance upon history's stage—and this,
not in any immature or feeble fashion, but, so to say, full-
grown. Full-grown is a term only slightly, if at all, too
strong. It is to John Wiclif (notwithstanding that Wiclif
established no separate religious organisation or Church)
that the Nonconformist of to-day must in thought carry
himself back as to his starting-point when he wishes to
trace the line of his spiritual ancestry downward from its
beginning. Modern Nonconformity—certainly so far as the
higher and worthier elements in it are concerned—finds
itself not merely prophesied or adumbrated or foreshadowed,
but actually anticipated, in the messages left to the world
by this Oxford scholar and this Lutterworth parish priest.
In him the paramount Nonconformist principle—that the
inner religious life with its necessities, as a matter between
the individual soul and God, is the centre whence thought
must run its radii to all matters of doctrine or organisation
or ecclesiastical order—that, in fact, this inner religious life
is the centre, other things standing only upon the circum-
ference line—in Wiclif this paramount principle reached an
expression marvellously full. As the sketch of Wiclif's
system, together with the story of the centuries after Wiclif
had passed away, will show, it is probably not too much to

say that in Wiclif's teaching the Nonconformist spirit found
in some respects clearer and more adequate manifestation
than at any subsequent period it received.   The reasons for
this will become apparent later on : for the moment, it may
be sufficient to state the fact.   Wiclif was not simply one
who faintly groped after the central Nonconformist principle,
not one who now and then, at intermittent hours, seized
hold upon the skirts of it as its elusive shape passed by.
He was at home with it, and in him it made its home.   His
clasp went right round it.   Here, at the beginning of things
—almost before the beginning of things—in John Wiclif the
Nonconformist spirit sprang into being, mature and strong.
For Wiclif wrought out his system round the central concep-
tion of the inner life, its essential nature and its needs.

Not less remarkable than the fulness of embodiment
which the Nonconformist spirit received in Wicliffism, is the
suddenness with which Wicliffism appeared.   In calling the
emergence of Wiclif's method and spirit " almost dramatic "
we employ a phrase no whit too highly coloured.   For
Wiclif, one might say, leapt without warning upon the stage.
He had no actual forerunners : no clear prophetic suggestions
of what was to come had made themselves heard : it was
not through any distinctly marked preliminary stages that
the process of things attained at last to the Wicliffite goal.
No one was expecting the new development.   It cannot be
said that this day had known any gradual dawn.   The sun
sprang to its zenith at once.   Indeed, the appearance of
Wiclif's system of doctrine can scarcely be called a develop-
ment at all : it was rather the flinging into the general body
of things of something entirely fresh.   It had the character
of a miracle rather than of a growth.   Doubtless this is in
a manner a superficial verdict.   Doubtless every event of
the kind is in some fashion the result of forces which have
been at work beneath the surface ; and doubtless keener
sight would enable us to detect an unbroken series of causes
and effects—the effects becoming causes in their turn—
linking every such event to an ancestry in the remote past.
But in the case of Wiclif, whatever evolution had taken
place had been so far beneath the surface that even now,
as we go over the ground, we cannot find any spot at which

that evolution can certainly be declared to have begun, nor
trace any line it can certainly be declared to have pursued.
In the case of many of even the most original thinkers of
history, it is possible to set out for them a sort of intellectual
genealogical tree—possible, very often, to show how their
thinking, original as it may be, had been prepared for, and
how its emergence at that particular juncture was to a large
extent a natural thing, having regard to the spirit of the
time and the general mental movement of mankind. It is
not so here. It is, indeed, possible to draw connecting lines
from Wiclif back to Marsiglio of Padua, to William of
Occam, to Grossetête of Lincoln, and to Fitz-Ralph of
Armagh. His affiliation with Occam and Grossetête—at
any rate his admiration for them—Wiclif himself affirmed ;
and from Fitz-Ralph Wiclif's doctrine of " Dominion " is
evidently derived. But whatever he took from any of his
predecessors Wiclif so worked over, so related with other
elements of thought, so fixed into place as part of a fresh
grouping of ideas, that at the very least it took some new-
ness through the newness of its associations ; and, more than
that, Wiclif infused into, and diffused through, any borrowed
conception a new colour, a new intensity, a new breath of
life, whereby the conception was in the end re-created rather
than borrowed after all. He did not with any deliberation
put himself where other thinkers had stood ; but, setting
out from his own starting-point, he, so to say, happened to
come now and again where other thinkers had been. He
merely picked up as he went by (his own course clearly
marked out the while) something that they had left behind.
His independence and originality were so marked that the
points of likeness between him and one or two previous
teachers hardly count. These points of likeness are assuredly
not enough to invalidate the contention that Wicliffism came
practically unheralded and with startling suddenness upon
the scene. And great as Wiclif appears when we realise
how in him the Nonconformist spirit found an expression
so rounded and full, his greatness is yet more enlarged in
our eyes when we remember that his system did not strike
the last note of a gradually ascending series, but struck into
the silence with the highest note at once. John Wiclif, as

religious thinker and reformer, was not in the ordinary sense
the product of natural evolution, the time-spirit's latest-born.
In him, one might affirm, the ordinary process of things
suffered an invasion from outside itself.

It should, perhaps, be added that stages in Wiclif's
teaching are admittedly discernible : we shall presently see
where the dividing lines have to be drawn ; and when it is
said that in him the Nonconformist spirit sprang practically
full-grown upon the stage, the fact of development is not in
anywise denied. But when the development of Wiclif's
thought is referred to, emphasis must be laid upon the fact
that even at the very beginning he worked from a central
idea which he never surrendered—that central idea of the
paramount importance of the inner life and its needs. What
development there was was simply due to his enlarging
appreciation of what that central idea implied. Wiclif's
passage from one idea to another *was*, in fact, a develop-
ment, not an inconsistency or a change. It was but the
shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day—not the
putting out of the earlier sun and the kindling of another
in its place. And certainly, taking Wicliffism in its entirety,
looking at it as the embodiment of one principle and idea—
an embodiment which was indeed progressive and had
indeed a growth within itself, but which is, nevertheless,
for the modern observer's eye, a complete and self-contained
whole, made perfect by that which every part supplies—
we are entitled to say that it showed the Nonconformist
spirit and principle at a stature not far short of mature.
Relating Wicliffism to other reforming systems, setting it
alongside of them in order to obtain a comparative measure-
ment of it and them, we perceive that Wicliffism is reform,
not in germ or infancy, but at a stage which must be called
actually adult. It was at this its first emergence that the
Nonconformist spirit showed itself in fulness of purity and
power.

SECTION 2

The England of Wiclif's Time

AUTHORITIES.—The Chroniclers Walsingham and Knighton, and the *Chronicon Angliae*—all three in the series published by the Master of the Rolls. Froissart. Langland's *Piers the Plowman* for the social condition of the time. The third volume (by Mr. T. F. Tout) of the *Political History of England* is of great value. Mr. G. M. Trevelyan's *England in the Age of Wiclif* contains a brilliant description of the entire situation. Lingard's *History of England* is also useful.

The period at which Wiclif emerges into our view was a period of restlessness, not to say of excitement, throughout the entire range of things. In regard to its political, social, and religious elements national life—indeed, European life as a whole—was, so to say, in a state of solution, in a transition stage on the way to the formation of something new. What the new birth of time was to be it might be difficult for the most acute observer to predict ; but, at the very least, the vague sense that something was impending must have been present to the minds of every one whose thought pierced below the surface of matters at all. Necessarily the very greatness of those results to which the contemporary stirring of men's minds and hearts was ultimately to lead must of itself have made it impossible for them to be foreseen. As we look back, taking the causes and effects of the centuries at a glance, tracing the progress of that secular ascending movement which has a decade or a century, rather than a single event or a single year, for each one of its mounting stairs, we can discern what the signs of the times foretold. We can see how fourteenth-century restlessness on its social side, speaking in Langland's *Piers the Plowman* and showing itself actively in the Peasant Revolt, was the first uprising of that self-respecting and vigorous national consciousness which was later on to assert itself against enemies both abroad and at home—against enemies abroad, when in Elizabeth's spacious times the English people bade defiance to the world ; against enemies at home, when under the tyrannous rule of the Stuart kings the English people claimed and fought for and vindicated their rights. We can see how that same fourteenth-century restlessness marked

the beginning of that splendid intellectual renaissance which,
once the invention of printing had come to its aid, moved
on so swiftly, through Erasmus and Colet and More, to the
glorious magnificence of the Shakespearean age.   And we
can see how that same fourteenth-century restlessness, on its
religious side, led on through the quasi-Reformation of
Henry the Eighth and the ecclesiastical settlement under
Edward the Sixth to the Puritanism of the seventeenth
century and the Nonconformity with which in this book we
shall have most to do.   But to the men of Wiclif's own age
all the prophetic books were necessarily sealed, and these
things were hidden from their eyes.   Still, there were enough
waves upon the sea to make men realise that a wind of
change was blowing, enough sense of question to waken
expectancy of some new word soon to be said.   The restless-
ness of Wiclif's time, the disturbance of certain things which
had hitherto been looked upon as being firm-based like the
eternal hills and lasting as the world—all this constituted, if
not an actual invitation to, at any rate a real opportunity
for, some new constructive force to arise.

The Papacy itself had, since the beginning of the century,
been shining with a somewhat dimmed splendour before the
eyes of men.   Plainly enough for all to see, it was no longer,
as it had once been and as it still claimed to be, the supreme
authority in all departments of life.   True, the controversies
which had led to a questioning of Papal power and had at
last, in their issue, circumscribed it with bounds it could not
pass, were political and not religious : it was the claim of
the Roman see that in its spiritual supremacy temporal
supremacy was also involved, against which the spirit of
revolt had dared to rise.   But, whatever the immediate
cause of the quarrel, the fact remained that men had ventured
to make the quarrel : there were those who had said " Nay "
to the Pope, and had nevertheless remained unconsumed by
any fire from heaven ; and although a touch which, on the
theory of Rome itself, could only be called a sacrilegious one,
had been laid upon the Lord's anointed, still the world went
on.   Far more important—so far as the future of mankind
was concerned—far more important than the settlement of the
primary dispute was the stirring of men's minds, the faint

and almost inarticulate consciousness that the giant whom
they had feared might have more weak spots in his armour,
the predisposition to further experiments in rebellion, which
the knowledge of these facts could not fail to produce. In
1305 the " Babylonian Captivity," as it is termed—the trans-
ference of the Papacy from Rome to Avignon,[1] and the
residence of the Pontiff there in subjection to the French
king—had begun, to terminate only in 1376, when Wiclif's
thought was going on from strength to strength, and moving
swiftly towards its consummation. It is not necessary to do
more than mention the bare facts which led to the Pope's
humiliation. Boniface the Eighth had claimed in France, as
he claimed in England, the right of interference in secular
affairs. England, indeed, had, since the time of King John,
paid tribute to the Roman see, or had been supposed so to
do ; and it was in connection with this tribute-money, as we
shall presently find, that Wiclif comes first of all upon the stage.
But when in 1301 Boniface intervened between Edward the
First and Scotland, claiming feudal lordship over the latter
country just as Edward was attempting to complete its con-
quest against the resistance of Comyn and Bruce, the inter-
vention was most emphatically thrust aside. It is curious to
note, by the way, that Boniface was urged on to action by
Philip the Fair of France, who was himself to have his own
dispute with Boniface immediately afterwards, and actually to
pull him from the Papal seat. However, the Parliament of
Lincoln repudiated the Pope's right of interference in no
doubtful terms, declaring that " the kings of England neither
have been wont to answer nor ought to answer, touching
their rights in the said kingdom, or any other temporal
rights, before any judge, ecclesiastical or secular, by the free
pre-eminence of the state of their royal dignity and of custom
irrefragably observed at all times." [2] For England, the
matter ended there. In France, things reached a crisis much
more severe. Partly, perhaps, to compensate himself for his
English failure, but principally in retaliation for a decision of
Philip's to impose upon the French clergy taxation from which

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[1] Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire* (ed. 1904), pp. 217, 306 ; Pastor, *History
of the Popes*, i. 57-116.
[2] Walter of Hemingford (English Historical Society), ii. 212.

they had hitherto been exempt, Boniface in the same year
issued a Bull declaring that Philip held the throne of France
from him as his vassal, and summoning Philip to appear at
Rome—the decisive answer he received being the burning
of his Bull.   Following this, and in defiance of the excom-
munication launched against him after two years of futile
negotiation, Philip in 1303 arraigned Boniface before the
French Parliament, and finally, through his armed emissaries
and hirelings, attacked the very palace and person of the Pope.
Imprisoned for some days, and rescued by the inhabitants
of Rome only to die within a month, Boniface made way
for Clement the Fifth (after the brief Pontificate of Benedict
the Eleventh had intervened), who was elected in 1305 in
consequence of French intrigue, who had necessarily to be
the obsequious servant of the French king, and who fixed
the Papal seat at Avignon, on the French border.   There,
through the greater part of the century, the Pope had to do
the bidding of the monarch and court ;[1] and there the
Papacy which had claimed supremacy in secular affairs was
itself held rigidly under the secular heel.   It was with this
humiliated Papacy that men saw themselves confronted in
Wiclif's time, and it was in presence of this humiliated
Papacy that Wiclif's own life of thought began ; for if, as is
commonly supposed, it was about 1335 that Wiclif came up
to Oxford, the humiliation had then lasted for thirty years.
Even among the mass of ordinary men there must have
been many who pondered these things ; and one cannot be
far wrong in thinking that whatever success was attained by
Wiclif, with his new initiative, his new way of looking at
things, his descent upon religious and ecclesiastical problems
from a new point of vantage, was in part due to the new
attitude which these things must have forced minds to take.
Or, if it be too much to say that men's minds had taken a
definite new attitude towards the Pope and his power, one
can at least put it this way, that the possibility of taking a
new attitude must have occurred to them.   If men had not
got beyond an interrogation mark, they must have got that
far, at least.   The fact that Papal pretensions had been
defied, and this with impunity, was itself enough to make

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[1] Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire* (ed. 1904), p. 253.

men's thought move in its sleep, and dream vague dreams, if no more. Men would at least be asking, "What next?" The door of change had at any rate been set slightly ajar, and men would know it, even though they could not tell whose the knock had been nor what visitor was about to come in.

If the Papacy had thus forfeited no small portion of its glory, the Church at home was equally under a cloud.[1] The different ranks and orders of the clergy quarrelled among themselves : the laity had their grievances against the clergy as a whole. The parish priests suffered in many cases from wholly inadequate means of support, for livings were often in the hands of monasteries, which of course claimed all the revenues for their own, only allowing to the working incumbent such small salary as they could in their niggardliness bring themselves to spare. Needless to say that, under these circumstances, between the "secular" clergy and the monks no love was lost. This, indeed, is a matter of age-long dispute ; and the same hostility has persisted between the working parochial clergy and the religious orders of the Roman Catholic Church down to the present day. The preaching friars went up and down the country selling absolutions at cheap rates ; and the four orders into which they were divided—the Franciscan, the Dominican, the Carmelite, and the Augustinian—competed against one another for this kind of custom with more bitterness than the keenest representatives of rival commercial houses would allow themselves to show to-day. And, of course, while these four different orders hated one another with perfect hatred, the parish clergyman, who considered himself the only proper authority for the hearing of confessions and the granting of absolution, hated them all. At all this disorder and disorganisation among his spiritual guides and superiors the layman looked on—surely not without considerable stirring of emotion and thought. He had his own complaints. He saw the Bishops—usually selected by the King from those who had rendered service to the State in some secular capacity, and, in consequence, much more men of worldly affairs than men of

[1] See Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wiclif* (ed. 1909), chaps. iv. and v.

spiritual power—monopolising the chief State posts in addition to their sees. He saw the parish clergy eking out their scanty stipends by a system of pluralism which meant that many parishes were left without any real spiritual oversight at all. He saw the friars forcing their way into the privacy of his home, and worming themselves by many insidious arts into the confidence of the female members of his family circle.[1] He saw unemployed clergymen (for of course the system, while it led, as just stated, to pluralism, led also, largely in consequence of that same pluralism, to many priests having nothing to do) hanging about on the watch for a chance, and, as one writer has put it, contracting " all the vices of the loafer." [2] He saw the monasteries and their inhabitants waxing fat on the gifts and bequests handed over to them by the fears and superstitions of many of the greatest in the land, thus absorbing a large amount of the nation's wealth for which they made no sort of return. He saw how many legal cases, which the ordinary tribunals of the country ought by rights to have tried, were relegated to the Bishops' Courts, and how in these Courts (particularly in cases of probate) a bribe could often secure judgment. He saw how a clergyman of any rank, if he committed a felony, was free from all fear of punishment at the hands of the law, how he could plead " benefit of clergy " in order to get himself tried by the spiritual powers, where leniency was sure not to be vainly sought. It was not a pretty picture ; and the contemplation of it was not calculated to inspire the layman with much reverence for organised religion as it stood. It was perhaps calculated to make him think of some possibility of reform. It was certainly calculated to make him realise the need of reform, whether or no he hoped for it or thought it possible—to give him a very pronounced conviction that the Church of his time was faithless to its call. And it was precisely to some of the points just alluded to, to some of these injustices and these mal-adjustments and these actual treacheries towards religion's demands, which must have made the layman, as he sadly noted them, move with

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[1] For an illustration see Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*.
[2] Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wiclif*, p. 154.

restless dissatisfaction in his religious relationships—it was to some of these that Wiclif addressed himself in his campaign.

In political affairs, as in religious, the times were out of joint. Over England's greatness, in regard to her foreign relations, her possessions abroad, her power of conquest, the shadows had fallen. In 1346 Cressy had been fought, Poitiers following ten years later; and at this middle of the century England, at the height of her splendid renown, had held tracts of French territory under her sway. It was doubtless a sway which implied mere military holding only, and was real only so far as the influence of an army's encampment could reach; but it at least testified to England's might. But when the later years of the century were reached, and when in 1368 the war was renewed, disaster came in place of victory. An English fleet was defeated and captured, the English garrisons abroad one after another sharing the same fate, till all that remained of our once immense possessions was a fortress-town here and there along the coast. These things have, of course, no direct connection with religious affairs. But they helped to increase unrest in the minds of men; they inevitably deepened the sense that things were not as they should be. As to home politics and the general condition of society, there too there was much that indicated transition, much that called for some new hand to take things into its grip and set them right. John of Gaunt, the younger son of Edward the Third, was by far the most powerful subject in the land; for the Black Prince, once foremost in arms, and still the idol of the people, lay in an illness which lasted for six years, and which terminated only with the Prince's death in 1376. And John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster (he was the only man in the realm, except the Prince of Wales, by whom the ducal title was held), had no other idea than that of enriching himself and his few like-minded companions with whatever spoil he could contrive to seize from every order and rank. Churchmen and laymen alike were to him but so many objects of prey. What opinion the merchants and the middle classes held of him, and how they would view a system of government which left them so largely to his

tender mercies, may easily be conjectured. Yet John of Gaunt maintained his ascendency over Edward till the close of that monarch's reign ; and his power, though temporarily threatened by the " Good Parliament " in 1376, was by no means eclipsed even when Richard the Second came to the throne. More closely connected with religion—at any rate, calling more loudly for some direct word from religion's lips—was the state of the poorer classes, and of the peasants who had formerly been compelled to render a definite service of labour to their feudal lords. The Black Death had in 1349 made such havoc among the population, and so reduced the supply of labourers, that wages had risen enormously—the " Statute of Labourers," [1] which provided that, spite of the altered circumstances, wages should remain what they had been before, failing entirely, as such a purely artificial enactment must necessarily fail, to effect its wished-for aim. This matter of wages was primarily the concern of the " free " labourers, of those labourers who were not bound to any feudal superior's land. But it affected also the " villeins " or serfs who resided on the estates of the great lords, and who tilled their own small plots (which were yet not their own) on condition of rendering some fixed service to the head. In a great many cases the overlord had formerly been willing to commute this personal service for payment of a certain sum. But with the scarcity of labourers—for of course the plague decimated the ranks of the serfs as well as those of the workers outside—he became less and less willing to do this, while at the same time the serf became more anxious to have it done. In the result, the villein in many cases left the estate to which he belonged, though this was a punishable crime, in order to seek the more remunerative field of work that lay beyond. This state of things, and the measures devised to grapple with it, naturally led to ever-growing friction, and culminated at last—after Langland had in *Piers the Plowman* told in song of the villeins' grievances and woes—in the Peasants' Rising of 1381. In strict law, doubtless the recalcitrant serfs

[1] See Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wiclif* (ed. 1909), pp. 187-189, and T. F. Tout in the *Political History of England*, iii. 373, 374. But the most lucid account of the statute is perhaps the one in Denton's *England in the Fifteenth Century*, pp. 217 ff. and 311 ff.

were wrong. But when their overlords—Parliament assisting —attempted to force them back into the place they had left, it was inevitable that a much deeper question should arise. Was the state of villeinage at all compatible with Christian ideas? Was not the entire system, with its exactions and its hardly pressing disabilities which left scarcely any department of the serf's life free from his overlord's intrusion and greed—was not the entire system a flat contradiction of the Christian conception of the brotherhood of man? Such questions as these came to be very much alive in men's thought. Indeed, as Langland witnesses, the whole problem of class relations was being greatly agitated during the fourteenth century's closing years. And the social question linked itself with other questions too—with the question of Church and religion, pre-eminently, for the oppressed and poverty-stricken ones saw the richer Churchmen, the high ecclesiastical dignitaries, enjoying the fat of the land, while there was nothing but hardship, and no Christian pity, for themselves. So that all round society, from John of Gaunt near the throne down to the villein chafing against his chains, the condition was one of unrest. The state of things might be fairly summarised by saying that practically everybody exacted as much as possible from the one next below him, and saved himself as best he could from the exactions of the one next above. It was a state of things which, as history has many times shown, could not endure.

This, briefly and roughly sketched as to some of its essential characteristics, was the England into which Wiclif and Wicliffism came. Some of the points touched upon may seem irrelevant to the telling of a tale in which religion is the chief interest, may seem to belong to secular history alone. But it is really quite impossible to sever religious history from secular, since in every nation's life the religious and the secular elements are at the very least braided together as strands of one cord, and not seldom actually blended as constituents of one compound whole. No religious movement can be understood—certainly the value of no religious movement can be properly estimated—except by taking a fairly comprehensive view of *all* the phenomena into the midst of which it projects its power. In the case of

Wiclif, too (and this is, in the ultimate resort, the reason why the foregoing sketch has been set down), we obtain a juster impression of his greatness, of the uniqueness of his mind, of the penetrativeness of his insight, of the independence toward passing circumstance inspired in him by the almost dazzling intensity of his spiritual consecration, when we keep before our minds some apprehension of the environment in which he lived his life and did his work. For the most significant thing of all is that Wiclif did not take the apparently most patent and obvious paths of reform. In their restlessness men might well be looking for an advent ; but of Wiclif they might say, " Art thou he that should come, or look we for another ? " For Wiclif touched the evils of his period not so much with a remedy that regarded them in their particularity, as with the one remedy that would suffice for the evils of any and every period. He came to the circumstances of the hour, not in the fashion which they themselves suggested as the immediately desirable one, but in the fashion prescribed by a far higher inspiration. His method was not for an age, but for all time. But precisely in order that this, and the wonder of it, may be realised, the age itself must be known.

SECTION 3

Wiclif's Early Years

AUTHORITIES.—The *Lives* of Wiclif, by Lewis and Vaughan. Among modern books Lechler's *Wiclif and his English Precursors*, of which there is a translation by Lorimer, holds first place. Brief accounts are to be found in *Wiclif's Place in History*, by Professor Montagu Burrows, and in *Wiclif and Movements for Reform*, by Reginald Lane Poole, M.A.—both of them containing valuable, though condensed, studies of the Reformer and his work.

Of Wiclif's early years we can scarcely say more than that there is little to be said. The precise date of his birth —though it must have been somewhere about 1320—is unknown. He was a north-countryman, a village about a mile from Richmond in Yorkshire being his native place. In those days youths came up to the Universities at an earlier age than is customary now ; and, as previously stated, the young Wiclif reached Oxford probably not later than 1335.

Over the whole of his University career considerable mystery has been left hanging, even after the very diligent research which has been carried on through recent decades ; perhaps, indeed, the only fact of which we can be absolutely sure is that he became Master of Balliol.   This one fact, however— inasmuch as the office of Master could only be held by a Fellow of the College—makes it likely that Wiclif had been attached to Balliol from the first, the likelihood being increased by the other fact that Balliol was a northern foundation, and one, therefore, which a student from the north would naturally choose for his own.   On another point, the general conclusion of competent investigators is that Wiclif was for a short time Warden of Canterbury Hall : [1] indeed, after an article which appeared in the *Church Quarterly Review* for October 1877, Dr. Lechler, the great German authority, declared that the question had been answered in the affirmative once for all.   Some, nevertheless, remain still unconvinced.[2]   The matter is of more interest than may at first appear ; for the Wiclif who held the Wardenship, whoever he may have been, was after a brief tenure of his post expelled (with the rest of the " secular " clergy) in favour of the monks.[3]   Enemies have not been slow to suggest that Wiclif entered on his reforming work principally in a spirit of revenge, and impelled by the chagrin he felt at the loss of place.   The point as to Wiclif's Warden- ship must be admitted to be at any rate much less definitely settled than is frequently supposed ; and whether (supposing the writer in the *Church Quarterly Review* and Lechler to be right) the imputation of motive sometimes made has any plausibility in view of Wiclif's character, as shown by subsequent events, perhaps our further study of Wiclif's career may help us to decide.   Practically the only certain things, then, are that Wiclif was trained at Oxford—then

[1] Lewis, *Life of Wiclif*, p. 11.

[2] Dr. Reginald Lane Poole takes the strong point that when Archbishop Islip made the nomination to the Wardenship, he was lying ill at Mayfield in Sussex, and that the then vicar of Mayfield was another John Wiclif who had been presented to the Mayfield living by the Archbishop himself, and who had probably been a fellow of Merton—Islip's own College.   Combining these facts, Dr. Poole holds that this was most likely the Wiclif who became Warden of Canterbury Hall.   *Wiclif and Movements for Reform*, p. 68.

[3] Lewis, *Life of Wiclif*, p. 12.

the premier seat of learning in the world—and that from
1360 to 1362 he was Master of Balliol College.   We know,
besides, that at different times Wiclif held one or two
livings in different parts of the country, and that finally, in
1374, he received from the Crown the rectory of Lutter-
worth, the Leicestershire village with which his name is
associated in the minds of most, and from whose church he
was destined to be carried out, stricken, just before his
death.   But by the time he became rector of Lutterworth,
Wiclif had practically done with Oxford, save perhaps for an
occasional brief residence there, and had entered upon those
wider activities which were crowded in such profusion into
his later years.   It is between his problematic Wardenship
of Canterbury Hall and his acceptance of the Lutterworth
rectory that we are directly to take up the thread of Wiclif's
life.

The sum total of our knowledge, as far as concerns
Wiclif's early years—and, indeed, the years of his early
middle life, for he is something over forty before he comes
clearly into our view—does not amount to very much.   But
Wiclif's connection with Oxford, and his position there,
deserve to be insisted upon, for these things serve to show
that he was no hot-headed and mentally undisciplined
fanatic, rushing upon projects of disintegration and change
without careful preparation of mind and systematising of
thought, but that he was a scholar of foremost rank.   True,
no one who looks into Wiclif's writings could suppose other-
wise for a moment.   And yet probably no man of equal
greatness has suffered more from detractors.   Reasons for
this are of course not far to seek.   For one thing, the
absence of printing prevented adequate knowledge of
Wiclif's work in the generations immediately following on
his death : no work of Wiclif's was printed before 1525 ;
and obscurity breeds misrepresentation, some of it innocent
and some of it wilful, quickly enough.   Wiclif's writings
were suppressed, whenever they could be got at by his
enemies.   Indeed, it was only because disciples carried them
abroad that they survived at all.   For another thing, some
of the more extreme Lollards, quite illegitimately claiming
Wiclif's authority for their revolutionary ideas, brought in

this way discredit on his name. Again, the subsequent centuries were for the most part impregnated by an atmosphere in which the characteristics of Wicliffism could hardly hope for unqualified appreciation. For some people Wiclif was in the theological sense too revolutionary. For others, his method, resting, as it did, upon a profoundly spiritual basis, and starting, as it did, from an entirely spiritual standpoint, did not seem revolutionary enough— that is, it did not lend itself to their particular shibboleths and party cries. And, needless to say, it was always the object of Roman Catholic writers to make him appear of no account. They were, indeed, not always consistent ; for Father Parsons, writing in the reign of Elizabeth, endeavoured to show that Wiclif, inasmuch as he remained in the Roman Communion to the end, could not be adduced as a witness in favour of Reformation doctrine, while later on, Varillas took a different line, and published a life of Wiclif (linking him with Jerome of Prague and John Huss), for the writing of which he dipped his pen in mere venom and gall.[1] But, whatever the precise method might be, the purpose was to make out that Wiclif was nothing very much after all. To belittle him has been the desire of not a few. Recent research has done a good deal to correct earlier misapprehensions, and to relegate many earlier attacks to their proper place of scorn. But while as to character the facts of Wiclif's career, as they are now more fully known, are in themselves sufficient testimony, it is also sufficient, when any belittling of Wiclif on the intellectual side is attempted, to emphasise the fact that he was a foremost man at the foremost seat of learning of his time. He was one of the great schoolmen, able to hold his own with the mightiest representatives of the class, the peer of them all, the superior of many. He was the successor of men like Roger Bacon, Grossetête, Duns Scotus, and Occam, and a successor of whom they would not have been ashamed. Knighton, a most bitter contemporary opponent, said of Wiclif that " he was reckoned inferior to none of his time

[1] Dr. James, the first librarian of the Bodleian, replied to Parsons ; and the Rev. John Lewis, of Margate, replied to Varillas in the *Life of Wiclif* (1720), which is still, for modern students, one of the most important sources of information.

in philosophy, and incomparable in the performance of school exercises. . . . He was very strong and prevailing in disputations, and was believed to be second to none in arguments." [1]   What manner of man Wiclif must have been to win such a tribute as this from so uncompromising a foe, it is not difficult to understand.   The first, and perhaps the greatest, emergence in English history of the Nonconformist spirit was from no half-taught enthusiast for immature ideas, but from a man who, in respect both of scholarship and of original powers of mind, must in all fairness be placed second to none.

SECTION 4

Wiclif's Earlier Teaching

AUTHORITIES.—The *Lives*, with Burrows and Lane Poole and Lechler, as for Section 3. The Chroniclers as for Section 2. *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, with preface by Dr. Shirley, in the Rolls Series.   The *Church Histories* of Collier and Fuller supply a very general view of the principal incidents.   Wiclif's writings were not preserved in England, but Dr. Lechler, who had access to the Latin MSS. in the Imperial Library at Vienna, has given us a summary of Wiclif's teaching on all important subjects. A brief account of Wiclif's doctrine of " Dominion " may also be found in R. Lane Poole's *Illustrations of the History of Mediæval Thought*, chap. x.   The English works have been edited by Thomas Arnold, and the *English Works hitherto unpublished*, by F. D. Mathew for the Early English Text Society. The Wiclif Society has issued a good many of the Latin writings.

As previously noted, it was in connection with the tribute which, since the time of John, had been paid, or supposed to be paid, by England to the Pope that Wiclif comes first of all clearly into our view.   The year was 1366 ; and if we take that year as a beginning, and 1377 as an end, we have marked out what may correctly be considered a quite distinct section of Wiclif's life and work.   A brief summary of the period would say that during its course Wiclif was in more or less close connection with a political party in the State ; that finding himself, in one particular and outstanding matter, in harmony with men who in all essentials were of a spirit far different from his own, he became entangled, through that limited and almost accidental agreement, in an alliance which by the nature of things

[1] Quoted by Lewis, *Life of Wiclif*, p. xix.

could not endure; but that at its close he disengaged himself from political fetters, and escaped into that realm of purely spiritual reconstruction and reform for which he supremely, and indeed exclusively, cared.

The English tribute was, as a matter of fact, greatly in arrear; and when in 1366 Urban the Fifth demanded that the arrears should be made up, the request was refused.[1] It became necessary to reply to those who denounced Parliament's rejection of the Papal claim, more particularly to a certain monk whom Wiclif designates as "Mixtim Theologus"; and Wiclif was chosen to prepare the reply. Evidently he was already a *persona grata* with the King, and a man of recognised importance; for although the conjecture of Dr. Lechler,[2] that he was actually a member of Parliament, cannot be sustained, yet Wiclif was certainly entitled to the name of "King's chaplain,"[3] and so describes himself in the paper he drew up. The paper itself is cast in the form of imaginary speeches delivered in an imaginary council by seven imaginary lords,[4] but is clearly Wiclif's own all through. Its chief interest lies in the light it casts upon Wiclif's standpoint, and in the testimony it bears to Wiclif's essential separateness from those with whom he was acting. For political as the immediate question was, political, at any rate, as King and Parliament and the bulk of the nation would doubtless take it to be, Wiclif's treatment of it is preeminently religious; and he puts into the mouths of his imaginary lords a series of contentions which are almost abstractly theological; and what was to everybody else simply a matter of national amour-propre becomes for Wiclif a matter touching not so much upon any kingdom of this world as upon the kingdom of God. The Pope, as "servant of God's servants," should receive payment only in return for services rendered—and the Pope renders none. Over whatever Church property is held in the country the

[1] Cotton's *Exact Abridgement of the Records in the Tower of London* (ed. 1657), p. 102.

[2] *Wiclif and his English Precursors* (English Translation), pp. 130, 131.

[3] Dr. Lechler, however, considers that "peculiaris regis clericus" does not mean "King's chaplain" in the ordinary sense, and that it points to Wiclif's membership in the Parliament of 1366. See reference given in the previous note.

[4] *Ibid.* pp. 125 ff.

King, not the Pope, is chief lord ; for according to the divine order (the connection of this point with Wiclif's fundamental religious position will presently appear) there can only be one holder of lordship—and this, therefore, must be the King. Moreover, by not recognising this, and accordingly doing homage to the King for the possessions of the Church, the Pope omits a duty to which he is bound, and in consequence forfeits whatever right to tribute he may have had. On a still higher note, one of the lords argues that Christ would not hold "civil lordship," and that the Pope, as Christ's follower, should therefore make a similar renunciation. The whole document puts a very complete fortification round the action which Parliament had taken. Every possible reply or objection appears to be anticipated and dealt with in advance. Moreover, the document is, though in form a defence, in reality an indictment, and goes far towards charging the Pope, by implication, with the doing of what is wrong, inasmuch as Urban was doing precisely the things which Wiclif declares he ought not to do. In the work on "Dominion," at which we shall presently glance, the possibility of transgression on the Pope's part is more or less definitely implied ; and a categorical statement that the Pope is *peccabilis*, as fallible (in the abstract, whether or no the abstract fallibility had been translated into actual sin) as any one else, came, it may be convenient to state here, a few years later, when in 1374 Wiclif wrote the second of his papers on this question of tribute—or rather, a paper whose subject a fresh action of the Pope's on the question of tribute had thrust to the front. In 1372 Gregory the Eleventh sent a special legate to England in order to collect the Papal dues ; and this functionary took an oath, only to break it, that he would be loyal to the King, would give information as to all letters that reached his hands from his master, and would neither send money out of the country nor quit it himself without express leave. "De juramento Arnaldi,"[1] Wiclif's paper of 1374, was written to demonstrate the legate's falseness, was unsparing in its denunciation of all the shifts and evasions with which

[1] The legate's name was Arnold Garnier. See Lechler, *Wiclif and his English Precursors* (English Translation), p. 137.

his mission had been performed, and in its declaration of the " peccability " of the Pope himself, gave articulate voice to what was clearly in Wiclif's mind when the earlier document was composed. But this was still to come. Returning to the earlier paper of 1366, let it be noted again how, over and above its completeness, its determination to leave no loop-hole, its careful setting of a sentinel over every gate whereat argument or denial might attempt a surprise, it has a quality which stamps it as religious far more than political, and proves its author to be ruled by religious considerations before all. How completely he was so ruled we cannot altogether realise till we grasp the theory embodied in Wiclif's doctrine of " Dominion," the doctrine which in this period he elaborated, and from which, as a centre, he worked to the end of his days. Looking back from the treatise *De dominio* (which was completed at some time in the course of these years, and which must have been, if not to a great extent actually written, at least preparing in Wiclif's mind, even as early as 1366),[1] to Wiclif's paper on the payment of tribute, we can see how in this latter the fundamental ideas of the treatise look out upon us from behind the actual words. It has even been contended [2]— so striking is the suggestion of the later and more fully developed ideas in the earlier document—that the paper does not belong to 1366 at all, but to 1374, when through Arnold Garnier the question of the papal tribute came again into prominence. This contention is beset by too many difficulties to be accepted, but its principal premiss does not admit of dispute. Of course it would be impossible, if we took the paper of 1366 by itself, to construct from it the whole of Wiclif's system, or to appreciate perfectly his point of view. But, even when we regard it alone, it affords ample evidence that the man who wrote it was standing on a height far above that of the men with whom he was acting and whose cause he was making his own. They were politicians moved by national pride. To him the political and national aspect of the matter was but a subordinate part of, was indeed almost lost in, a larger

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[1] 1368 may be taken as the approximate date of the *De dominio*.
[2] By J. Loserth. See *English Historical Review*, xi. 319-328.

whole.   In an England paying toll to the Papacy, the King,
the nobles, and the people in the mass saw an outrage to
which patriotic feeling forbade them to submit.   In a Papacy
claiming toll from England, Wiclif saw an outrage on the
vital interests of religion, a disturbance of those relations
between God and man on the maintenance of which, for all
alike from the Pope himself down to the humblest soul, the
religious life depended.   Even as he came into contact with
the politics of the hour, his " soul was like a star, and
dwelt apart."

How far the authorities understood the principles and
the spirit which lay behind Wiclif's treatment of the question
of the hour, or how far they appreciated them if they did
understand, we can only conjecture.   At any rate, Wiclif
had proved himself a tower of strength for them, an ally so
alert and powerful, so skilful in his dispositions and assaults,
that at his coming the enemy seemed to be swept from the
field ; and he had his reward.   That the Court was gratefully
mindful of his services is shown (if we may, before passing
to a brief consideration of Wiclif's central doctrine, set down
one or two happenings of a subsequent year) by the fact
of his appointment, in 1374, to be one of the royal pleni-
potentiaries at Bruges,[1] in connection with a conference held
there between representatives of the Pope and representatives
of the English King—the subject of the conference being
the extent of the Pope's right to interfere with appointments
to offices in the English Church.   Wiclif's name has only
one, that of the Bishop of Bangor, taking precedence of it
on the document appointing the Commission ; and on the
Commissioner's return he was made Prebendary of Aust in
the collegiate Church of Westbury, though this last piece of
preferment he did not choose to keep.   It was in this same
year, it will be remembered, though previously to his visit to
Bruges, that the rectory of Lutterworth came into Wiclif's
hands.   His Commissionership, and the honour done to him
when his task at Bruges was over, indicate how greatly he
was at this time esteemed.   And it was doubtless in con-
nection with this commissionership that he was brought into

[1] Lechler, *Wiclif and his English Precursors* (English Translation), pp.
143, 144.

contact—or into closer contact if, as is quite possible, any sort of contact had been formed before—with John of Gaunt ; a contact which, though for the moment it made him take an apparently more pronounced political line, led him to shake himself free of politics ere long.

But through all this period, though Professor Montagu Burrows is right in saying that it " may be called, speaking roughly, the political period of the Reformer's life," [1] it was from a spiritual standpoint that Wiclif reached out upon whatever political matters he touched. It was the doctrine of " Dominion " on which he based himself ; and this was a doctrine concerned with, and insisting upon, the paramount importance of man's individual relations with God. According to Wiclif, not only has every man an immediate relation with God, but (this is not always realised, but is essential to a full understanding of Wiclif's scheme) no man has, ideally, any other relation than this. Whatever a man holds— rights, powers, authority, whether over the constituent elements of his own life and his own personality, or over other and more external things—he holds directly from God, his holding, however, being conditioned by his due rendering back to God of the service God exacts, conditioned, that is, by his righteousness. This is what Wiclif means by saying that " Dominion is founded in Grace." And this is not quite all. The righteous man, in virtue of his righteousness, has *all* things ; since all " dominion " is derived immediately from God, no place for intermediaries remains. So that what Wiclif has in view, ideally, is a world in which every man possesses everything, since in an ideal world every man would be righteous, a world from which all relations imply-ing the claims of one life upon another, the subordination of one life to another, would have disappeared, and in which, through an absolute individualism (every individual, however, being in true and direct contact with God, the Source of all he is), all the movements of the world, in spheres political, social, and religious, would be themselves ideal. In short, Wiclif starts his theoretical construction of things, and would (although recognising that this is in fact impossible), have the practical construction of things start also, from a holy

[1] *Wiclif's Place in History*, p. 58.

relation between God and the individual soul. A holy life
directly derived, on the part of everybody, from immediate
contact with life's holy Source and Spring is Wiclif's con-
ception. It is from this condition of things, if only it
existed, that all human arrangements ought to emerge as
the natural and inevitable consequence. All organisation,
so far as under this ideal condition of affairs any organisa-
tion would be required or could find place—all organisation,
both in Church and State, should be only, as it were (to
repeat a phrase employed at an earlier stage),[1] life taking
upon itself a visible dress, only, as it were, the crystallisation
of life's breath. The individual relation between man and
God was to be the creative force by which the world was
made. Holiness itself, in fact, is in effect to make, to give
birth to, all that is. Life, not organisation, was the supreme
thing.

A good many things are of course implied in this
contention ; and some of them, at any rate, Wiclif did not
shrink from setting forth in plain words. On the religious
and ecclesiastical side, the doctrine of a direct holding from
God on the part of every man carried the implication that
the entire existing ecclesiastical system had in it nothing
necessary or unalterable : the doctrine made every man his
own priest, looking upon the Church, not so much as the
antecedent producer of a right relation between God and
man, as the fruit and product of it ; and it was at least
conceivable that this right relation might at some time or
other work itself out into an ecclesiastical organisation or
society quite different from that of the day. Indeed, a
Church really constituted and preserved as a Church, not
by the clergy, but by the laity, is, Wiclif declares, not at
all an impossible thing.[2] Moreover, in making the divine
" Dominion " — the immediate personal relation between
man and God, constituted out of God's lordship and man's
responsive service — the regulative or initial idea, Wiclif
implied what in the paper of 1374 he directly affirmed, that
even the Pope's authority was invalid unless, in the act of

[1] *Supra*, p. 4.
[2] Lechler, *Wiclif and his English Precursors* (English Translation), pp.
289, 305, etc.

being exercised, it issued straight out of the Pope's own experience of that relation, unless it were a product of the divine " Dominion " over the Pope himself, and of the Pope's response thereto. In other words, apart from a moral and spiritual quality in it, the Papal power had no right to impose itself upon men ; and it was at least abstractly possible that the Pope might sin. Any decree of the Pope's that was wrong was *ipso facto* futile ; and any decree of the Pope's that was right became binding upon a man, not because it was the Pope's, but because a man recognised it as having been inspired in that direct relation with God on which the Pope, no less than others, must depend, and, so recognising it, found it becoming a direct inspiration to himself, not from the Pope after all but from God. Conversely, the Pope had no real power of excommunication unless a man had first of all excommunicated himself : it was a man's dropping away from that direct and holy relation with God implied in the " Dominion " theory that was the essential thing, the thing that really counted ; and the Pope's ban could not make, but could only publish and endorse, a doom that had already fallen. If, on the other hand, the Pope excommunicated a man who had not really transgressed, the excommunication carried no significance at all. Throughout, the individual man's status—in this spiritual ordering of things which the theory of " Dominion " sketched—was of precisely the same kind as the Pope's own. Man's line of connection with God did not run through the Pope, but, as it were, parallel with the Pope's. All this is for the most part admittedly paraphrase, not quotation ; but it may be taken as representing fairly the implications of Wiclif's great work. It is revolutionary enough ; and it necessarily appeared much more revolutionary to men of the fourteenth century than to men of ours. True, Grossetête of Lincoln had dared to say to Innocent the Fourth, " I obey Apostolic commands, but those which oppose Apostolic commands I refuse." [1] But any such previous whispers had been sporadic : they might well have seemed to be little more than transitory expressions of emotion rather than

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[1] For Grossetête's attitude towards the Papacy, see Lechler, *Wiclif and his English Precursors* (English Translation), pp. 35-38.

statements of deliberate opinion, and expressions to which, at any rate to the consequences of which, not even their authors must be held too rigidly bound.   It is in this way, at any rate—whether or no the authors of the expressions were themselves conscious that they were opening doors through which they feared to peer too intently—it is in this way, we may be sure, that the expressions were taken by the mass of men.   But Wiclif's utterances could not be taken so.   With Wiclif the whole thing was the deliberate and systematic working out of one central idea which he held to be universally and eternally binding.   He stood upon first principles—did not, so to say, point hesitatingly back in the direction where they were, from some point at which he found himself half-accidentally placed.   He spoke, not out of a mood which a passing change of circumstances or a sudden dislocation of the ordinary ecclesiastical machinery had bred in him, but from the heart of things as he supposed himself to have reached it.   He possessed, not simply a more or less vague feeling that if the wrongness of things became a little more accentuated something might have to be done, but a pronounced feeling that everything must be done over again from the beginning.   It was not merely a case of wondering how much repair, if more rains fell upon the house and yet more violent gales should rage, might be required, but a conviction that an absolutely fresh foundation must be laid and an absolutely new edifice reared up.   Wiclif's doctrine of " Dominion," with all that it implied, meant that the entire system of ecclesiastical order and religious doctrine was being, or was going to be, re-made out of fresh material and according to new plan.   It was revolutionary indeed.   Something of the strictly ecclesiastical revolution it implied has been spoken of.   This Wiclif proclaimed from the beginning.   And, as we shall presently see—when we have glanced at that second period of Wiclif's life which began after 1377 when the Reformer's political entanglements were untied—Wiclif had, when the end came, covered practically the whole of the doctrinal ground as well.

On the social and political side, too, Wiclif's doctrine of " Dominion " carried, theoretically at least, a good many

consequences. In this connection, however, it must be borne in mind that Wiclif knew himself to be painting an ideal picture, whose outlines and groupings it was quite impossible for human society to reproduce. The picture itself, indeed, he could not but paint; for the vision of a world constituted by men in immediate contact with God, and set in no other contact at all, recognising His "dominion," rendering Him the service which is His right, and so holding "dominion" from Him in their turn—this vision was glorious in Wiclif's eyes; and he was impelled to set forth the consequences which, in the social sphere no less than in the religious, would follow "as the night the day," if man did but accept God's eternal plan. There was too much grandeur in Wiclif's conception, too much inclusiveness in his grasp, too much unity and completeness in his thought, for him to leave these things alone. With a conviction, on the one hand, that the entire system of human life ought to evolve automatically from "dominion" exercised by God and accepted by man, and, on the other hand, that God's exercise and man's acceptance of "dominion" were bound to evolve an entire system of human life, he could not hold aloof from showing how in the social and political sphere the evolution would work. If a principle were of all-round application, it was impossible to leave one large segment of life's circle without some indication of its touch. Indeed, if Wiclif had not himself applied his doctrine to the social side of life, others would have done it for him: as a matter of fact, the extremer spirits engaged in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 used Wiclif's name and declared themselves to be his disciples;[1] and that Lollardy became, in the years after Wiclif's death, a revolutionary rather than a religious movement with some is not to be denied. But this only proves that the title of Wicliffism was arrogated, or bestowed, where it could not legitimately lodge. For this Wiclif is not to blame. Certainly, as previously stated, communism is theoretically involved in Wiclif's teaching that all men (provided the condition of service be observed) hold *all*

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[1] But the alleged confession of John Ball, a leader of the revolt, to the effect that he had communications with Wiclif, has been proved to be a forgery. Burrows, *Wiclif's Place in History*, p. 14.

things immediately from God. But Wiclif was always careful to declare that he drew an ideal condition of things alone; and qualification followed qualification, or rather guarding phrase followed guarding phrase, by way of indicating that, whatever the ideal might be, its present realisation was quite out of sight. It is clear enough that while Wiclif looked upon the entire political and social system, with its rulers and its ruled, its ranks and its orders, its properties and its poverties, as a violation of the original divine idea, a consequence of human sin, he realised that for the time there was no course but to accept it, and to wait for a day when the journey back toward the realisation of the divine idea would begin. The world had dropped quite away from that spiritual constitution of itself which would have issued from the maintenance of a right relation with God on the part of every individual man; and it had not sufficient reserve force, as yet, even to commence anything like a radical self-reform. This was not a hopeless pessimism; for Wiclif would at least have the world look to the ideal heights it had forsaken; and the Church, whatever the world might do, was to seek to be perfect, so becoming a leaven which might in time leaven the whole lump. With the Church there was to be no acceptance of things as they were. But so far as concerned the social and political order, this was for the time being the only way. Indeed, Wiclif appears —recognising that his ideal condition of things, in which the doctrine of "Dominion" would work itself out from God through man, from heaven through earth, could never become a realised fact—to have drawn a line straight across his picture *between* heaven and earth, *between* God and man, and then to have begun the application of his doctrine all over again on the lower plane. "Dominion" of a kind is now in the hands of the rulers of men, to be exercised by them over their fellows. It ought not to be so. But so, as a matter of fact, it is. God has permitted it; and so, in Wiclif's curious and somewhat startling sentence, "God must obey the devil." Men who, strictly speaking, have by their unworthiness forfeited all rights, have rights over the rest. And since the divine wisdom permits this, the rest must (all the more readily that they have, through sin, themselves

forfeited all rights of their own) recognise and accept it :
man must be content in this sphere of political and social
order to " hold " from man. Existing arrangements must
be respected, and even wicked rulers must be obeyed. Not
even from this last declaration does Wiclif shrink ; and this
is in itself enough to prove how far Wiclif was from any
desire to push his theory to its logical issue on the political
side. One writer has said of Wiclif's famous maxim,
" Dominion is founded in Grace," " I felt convinced many
years ago that he meant by this that all human authority
was conditioned by the worthiness of the person exercising
it, and that proved unworthiness was a valid reason for
withdrawing one's allegiance." [1] The first part of the inter-
pretation is partly true, though it is far from exhausting the
significance of Wiclif's statement. Wiclif meant by it, as
we saw, not primarily that human authority depends upon
the worthiness of the person exercising it, but that a man's
right to be or do or have anything whatsoever depends upon
his responsive service to the " dominion " of God. Of course,
when once " authority " in the ordinary sense had come into
being, which in an ideal state of things it would never have
done, it would in a manner depend upon worthiness in its
turn. That, in other words, would be the ideal *within the
non-ideal state of things.* But, while this consideration would
impose an obligation upon the rulers, it would not, however
rulers might violate it, supply any excuse for rebellion to the
ruled. The second part of the suggested explanation, how-
ever, finds no countenance in Wiclif's treatment of social and
political matters. Disobedience in this sphere is nowhere
justified or condoned. Things must be taken as they are, non-
ideal as their condition may be. With the Church it is different.
The Church exists to bring back the ideal condition of
things, at least to make an endeavour in that direction, and
must herself therefore exemplify the ideal condition of things
so far as might be. In the sphere of the Church the
condition of worthiness was paramount, and we have already
seen how, apart from worthiness, according to Wiclif, not
even the Pope himself could " hold." But, in matters of

[1] Professor J. E. Thorold Rogers, *The Economic Interpretation of History*,
7th edition, p. 76.

State, Wiclif considered that, the whole arrangement being itself the consequence of sin, and being permeated through and through by the sinfulness of all embraced within its boundaries, ideal considerations could not be pressed, and there must be an acquiescence with things as they were found.   Rulers might have lost all real right to rule ; but then the ruled had lost all real right to remind them of the fact.   Unworthiness in rulers and ruled, so to say, cancelled out—this process leaving the relation between the two intact in the end.   In the chaos which had come upon all things through the sinfulness of man, no one had any title to break up the prevailing order.   The system might be wrong; but no one *within* it had any ground of complaint, for every one within it was to blame for its existence ; it was only from *without*—from the God of the ideal system— that any complaint could come.   Wiclif, in fine, was no social or political revolutionary.   Whatever might be in strict logic deducible from his doctrine of " Dominion," he expressly affirmed, for the discouragement of all fanatics who might seek to shelter themselves behind his name, that he painted only an ideal.   His fair " City of God " was a city that could be built only in dreams.

In practice, then, it would seem that Wicliffism had little or nothing to do with the existing political system.   But at one point this very severance between the current order and the ideal scheme which Wiclif sketched brought Wiclif into sharp conflict with things as they were being carried on. The worldly arrangements of the State, faulty as they essentially were, must be taken as they stood ; but the Church represented the ideal, and must conform to the ideal so far as might be.   In the Church the theory of " Dominion," with all its spiritual implications, must be worked out to the utmost possible degree : the Church and its ministers must endeavour to put themselves into and keep themselves in the position which, under an ideal system, they would occupy. But what Wiclif saw before him was a Church which let itself down to the level of the common order, accepted that order's principles and adopted its methods, became, in fact, actually a part of that order (not only as to visible member- ship in it, which was, of course, inevitable, but as to spirit and

method) instead of witnessing to the better thing. We have
already seen that many of the Bishops held high secular posts
in addition to their sees ; and when the laity, from their
point of view, objected to this, they found Wiclif on their side,
though his objection was made from a point of view very
different from theirs. Concerning these " Caesarean clergy,"
as he called them, Wiclif's language was always that of
unmeasured indignation. He did not hesitate to say, con-
cerning the Archbishop Sudbury, who was done to death
under the hands of the mob,[1] that, although the murder could
not be excused, the Archbishop had none the less died in
sin, since he had held the post of Chancellor, the most
secular office in the land. All this " holding " of worldly
posts by officers of the Church—posts belonging to a system
which, under the ideal scheme the Church stood for, could
never have prevailed—was a betrayal on the Church's part
of its sacred trust, and nothing less. A still more important
point was in connection with the possession by the Church of
temporal wealth. Since individual possession by any man
was a contradiction of ideal commands, possession by the
Church was a sin. This, together with the point just
mentioned regarding the occupancy of secular positions, was
doubtless what Wiclif had in mind when, in his first paper
on the question of England's tribute to the Pope, he declared
that Christ would not hold " civil lordship," and that the
Pope, as Christ's follower, was properly under a similar
restraint. It was from these high spiritual motives that Wiclif
had ranged himself on the national side. Wiclif's proposal
in regard to Church property and endowments was that the
wealth which the Church had been for long accumulating
should be returned to its original lay owners—an impractic-
able suggestion, no doubt, and one which raised more difficulties
than it solved, but a suggestion which at any rate proved
the utter sincerity of Wiclif's heart and his readiness, so far
as the Church was concerned, to go to the furthest length in
the direction of carrying his theories into effect. The sum
of it all, curiously enough, came to be this—that when
Church and State met in conflict, it was the State, not the

[1] Lechler, *Wiclif and his English Precursors* (English Translation), pp.
372, 378.

Church, which won Wiclif's sympathy and support.   For the State had a kind of tentative and provisional permission to persist in the non-ideal course : it might go on its way with its authorities and its possessions ; but when the Church adopted the State's programme and, in doing so, necessarily crossed the State's path, the State had a right to object. The State had an actual monopoly of the " quasi-dominion," so to call it, which under the non-ideal system of things God had delegated to man—which, by the way, brings us back to Wiclif's first paper on the tribute question, with its declaration that since there could be but one holder of lordship, he must be, not the Pope, but the King.   The State could remind the Church of the ideal which the Church itself had forgotten.   Nay, the thing went further than that.   The authority of the State—the entire State system—if not originally legitimate, had become for the time legitimised ; and in the exercise of this legitimised power the State could actually force the Church back to its true path.[1]   Wiclif did not hesitate to say that the King should insist on an adequate supervision of their sees by the Bishops, should take measures to do away with absentee pastors, and should deprive immoral and incapable clergy of their posts.   What authority there was, was in the hands of the State ; and if the Church strayed, or, having strayed, showed no sign of turning home, the State was entitled, was even in duty bound, to step in, take it in charge, and point out the way back.   It seems at first sight a strange thing that Wiclif's supremely spiritual conception of the Church should have led him to this sub-jecting of the Church to the secular power, to this calling in of the State to police the Church.   One might have expected —remembering Wiclif's insistence on the paramount im-portance of man's individual relations with God—that he would have fastened upon the idea which in later times the Nonconformist spirit saw to be involved in that insistence, and would simply have bidden the Church throw herself

[1] The idea that the authority of the State was traceable to human sin was a common idea in mediævalism.   " Divinely ordained though it be, the origin of the State lies in sin ; for sin alone made government and law needful for man " (H. O. Taylor, *The Mediæval Mind*, ii. 277).   But the idea was usually insisted upon with the view of utterly subordinating the State to the Church—a different turn from that which Wiclif gave it.

more completely, for her healing, under the spiritual inspira-
tions she had hitherto neglected, if not despised. Such
appeals, indeed, Wiclif did not fail to make with passionate
earnestness time and time again. But perhaps the rigid
consistency of his scholastic method of thinking prevented
him from laying exclusive stress upon an inward recuperative
process which the Church was to go through, and drove him
along another line. The idea of "dominion," "lordship,"
"authority," possessed him ; and it was this key that must,
somehow or other, be fitted into the wards of the lock. Well,
here in the State was a legitimised "dominion" which,
because it was legitimised, had acquired something of a divine
character : it must extend, therefore, over every element in
the body politic—must extend as a further inference over
the Church itself. The State was the only authority that
could plead anything like a charter divinely bestowed. The
King, then, was the "vicar of God" ; and every clergyman of
the land, with all his temporal possessions, is subject to the
King's rule.[1] The State, consequently, was permitted, and
even required, to employ its quasi-divine "lordship" for the
purpose of compelling the Church to the true path : the
authority which came into the hands of the State through
God's permission of a non-ideal condition of things, was to
be used for driving the Church back towards the ideal. It
was all consistent enough, even if it left out of account some
considerations which dawned upon the horizon of a later age.
And, of course, it was all, with Wiclif, for the sake of the
Church. When he supported the State against the Church,
made the State the custodian of the Church, he did it
because he wanted to see the Church crowned with holy
glory once again. Churchmen must not hold secular office,
for this was contrary to the true Church-ideal. The Church
must strip herself of her temporalities, for her greedy grasp-
ing of them was contrary to the true Church-ideal. Wiclif
appeared in these matters on the side of the State only
because he was in the highest sense on the side of the Church.
But, of course, in this way Wiclif, though the impulse of his
thought and action lay in a quite other realm than the social
and political one, and notwithstanding his repudiation of any

[1] *De officio Regis* (ed. Pollard and Sayle for Wiclif Society), pp. 4, 66, etc.

intention to disturb the social or political order, came into closest contact with some of the social and political questions which were agitating the minds of men.

For all that Wiclif so vehemently proclaimed concerning the evil of the Church's present courses, still more all that he proclaimed as to the necessity for the Church's return to a condition of " evangelical poverty," most of all his declaration that the State had a right to step in and take order with a corrupt and recalcitrant Church, must have been sweet music in the ears of John of Gaunt and the party of which he was the head. Needless to say, this party cared nothing at all for spiritual ideals : the one aim of the Duke was to obtain for himself and his friends, by successive turns of the screw, whatever could be got from Church and laymen alike : to him the whole of society was simply a tree from whose branches it was his business to pluck all the luscious fruit. But Wiclif's doctrine, and Wiclif himself, made a force much too valuable to be lost.   We have seen that Wiclif's Commissionership to Bruges brought him into close relations with John of Gaunt ; and we may conveniently note in this place the remaining external facts of this " political " period in Wiclif's career. As far back as 1371 some of the Bishops had been compelled, under John of Gaunt's pressure, to give up their secular offices—a procedure for which Wiclif's countenance might have been pleaded ; and later on it seemed a natural thing, having regard to Wiclif's deliberately affirmed conviction concerning the advisability of sequestrating the property of the Church and returning it into the hands of its former owners, to call the bold teacher up from Oxford and bid him preach in London what he had taught in his books.   This was what the Duke did.   Through 1376 Wiclif's voice proclaimed the doctrine of disendowment in church after church, many of the London citizens hearing him gladly, and many of the richer nobles (for obvious reasons) ranging themselves on his side.   The ambitious and designing John of Gaunt could have found no better ally, and could have enlisted no more fit apostle in his cause ; for in argument, in skill of putting points, in subtle and yet clear dialectic, Wiclif had no rival.   As Mr. Trevelyan says, " From its purely political aspect, the alliance was much like

that of Oxford and Bolingbroke with Swift. In each case a
pair of ambitious politicians [1] wished to persuade the nation
that a certain policy was desirable, and in each case they
used for this purpose a man supreme in the arts of persuasion
and debate." [2]   But of course it is only in the limited sense
indicated by the quotation that the parallel holds good.
There is nothing common to Wiclif and Swift except the
fact that unscrupulous men used them as political tools.
One may be surprised, in Wiclif's case, that he allowed
himself to be so used, and that he did not more clearly
perceive the utterly selfish character of John of Gaunt's
crusade ; yet further consideration may well temper one's
surprise. Perhaps, indeed, Wiclif was not so blind as he
seems to have been. Perhaps he deliberately elected to take
the risk, hoping that the spiritual cause he was serving would
be able to disentangle itself presently from its political
alliance, and that even if the wheat and tares grew together
for a while there might come a harvest-hour when separation
could be effected between the two. But, even if this was
not the case, surprise may still die down. For Wiclif was
looking so steadfastly at the far-off sky where the sun of his
ideal was shining that he might well be unable to see very
clearly when it came to a matter of looking at nearer things.
From very excess of light he might well find himself blinded
when his eyes dropped down to earth. At any rate, if Wiclif
knowingly took the risk he soon saw his fault ; while if it
was unknowingly he took it, it was soon forced home to
his mind.

    Wiclif's attack upon Church temporalities, being in effect
an attack upon the ecclesiastical authorities, not unnaturally
aroused those authorities to resist—or rather, to make a
counter-attack from their own side ; and in February of 1377
Wiclif was summoned to appear before them at St. Paul's.
Archbishop Sudbury had been in no hurry to disturb himself ;
but Bishop Courtenay of London was a man of sterner mould
and more fiery spirit, and had his way. The merits of the
immediate question, however, were not approached ; and the

[1] The other member of the "pair" in this instance was Lord Percy, John of
Gaunt's close associate.

[2] *England in the Age of Wiclif* (ed. 1909), p. 42.

issue, so far as any issue at all emerged, was not between
Wiclif and the Bishops, but between John of Gaunt and the
London crowd.   For the Duke, together with Lord Percy
(his close comrade in all things, and a man of like spirit
with himself), attended at Wiclif's side, perhaps feeling
himself bound to support the man whom he had enlisted in
his service ;[1] and between the Duke and the Londoners
bitterness of feeling was most acute.   The people of London
were quite favourably disposed towards Wiclif himself—a
fact which was sufficiently proved a year later, when at a
second trial they saved him from the Bishop's hands.   But,
for the moment, in 1377, their chief concern was not to save
Wiclif from the Bishops, but to save themselves from the
tyrannies of John of Gaunt.   At the very time of the trial
there was before Parliament a Bill which proposed to deprive
the Mayor of power, and to put the government of the City
into the King's Marshal's hands [2]—the King's Marshal being
that same Lord Percy mentioned just now.   What this
Bill would mean for the citizens they were only too well
aware ; and the possible danger to their liberties over-
shadowed all else in their thoughts.   They might have little
love for the Bishops, and might heartily agree with Wiclif
that the greed of ecclesiastical dignitaries was a treachery
and a disgrace ; but if under the exactions of the Church
they had been chastised with whips, the threatened tyranny
of the King's Marshal would be a chastising with scorpions.
It is small wonder that they were primarily anxious about
the worse fate, and that the sight of John of Gaunt and
Lord Percy rendered them oblivious of everything except
that they were face to face with their two worst foes.   The
bearing of the Prince and the noble only tended to accentuate
the hatred of the crowd.   Indeed, nothing could show more
plainly what spirit these men were of than their overbearing
insolence in the Lady Chapel of St. Paul's.   Not in this
way should a worthy cause have been upheld.   Percy, as he
entered, pushed every one in the Cathedral aisle from his
path, and when Courtenay reproved him (certainly in no

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[1] Lewis, *Life of Wiclif*, pp. 52-54.
[2] See for this (also for the scene in the Chapel) Sydney A. Smith's *John of Gaunt*, pp. 150-152.

measured terms, for Courtenay's temper fairly matched
Percy's own), gave back ever rougher and rougher words.
In the end, after a wrangle as to whether Wiclif should sit
or stand to reply to the charges brought against him, John
of Gaunt gave rein to his tongue, declared that he would
humble the entire episcopal bench, and, as was subsequently
declared, said something to his attendants about dragging
out Courtenay by the hair of his head.   That the threat
would have been carried out is by no means improbable ;
but the Londoners—one can imagine how all the time the
temperature of their wrath had been mounting—taking the
matter into their own hands, flung themselves wildly upon
the Duke's guard.   In the confusion that ensued Wiclif's
friends bore him away.

So the trial ended before it had well begun.   No word
was said as to the heresy for which Wiclif had been
arraigned.   From that point of view the thing was a farce.
What Wiclif himself thought of it all we cannot tell from
any word of his own.   So far as is known, he stood silent
throughout the scene, and no after-reference to it has been
found.   But if we do not know, we may at least conjecture ;
and perhaps that persistent silence is itself a word.   In all
probability the scene—from his point of view, and in relation
to the high interests he loved the best, so sordid and so
mean—opened Wiclif's eyes.   He can hardly have failed
to ask himself whether these men—this arrogant Duke, this
blustering noble—were fitted to bear the vessels of the Lord ;
and if he asked himself the question, there can be no doubt
as to the reply.   To Wiclif, as he thought of his great aim
of spiritualising the Church, and set side by side with it, as
part of the means whereby it was to be achieved, the coarse
brutality of Lord Percy and the Duke, the whole thing must
have seemed like the desecration of sacramental bread.
And perhaps he understood that these men were after all
giving nothing to his cause, and could give nothing to it—
that by its association with them his cause could only lose.
The consciousness of the calling wherewith he was called
must surely, in those moments of riot at St. Paul's, have
dropped, almost like a barrier clanging in its fall, between
him and them.   Though we have no word of his, it is not

difficult to read his heart. And we find what we should have expected to find, if in saying these things we read his heart aright—that the riot of 1377 marks the close of Wiclif's connection (and it had after all never amounted to very much) with the politics of his day.

SECTION 5

Wiclif's Later Years

AUTHORITIES.—As for Section 4.

We may deal more briefly with the other period of Wiclif's life, with those seven years which after 1377 still remained to him. It is not because they are less important than the others that treatment of them may be brief, but because all that Wiclif did as they passed on consisted in making clearer and disseminating the great principles which we have already examined and attempted to expound, and in driving them to the conclusions and doctrinal applications they involved. This, in fact, was henceforth his work. It was in these years that Wiclif put forth the *Summa in theologia*, covering almost the entire theological ground. It was in these years, also, that the mass of his English writings was prepared : it was in these years that he produced his doctrine of the Eucharist, the elaboration of his views on this one topic (since this one topic was found, as it always is found, to involve the whole question of God's communication of grace to man) necessarily causing him to touch upon very many other doctrinal themes : it was in these years that he made his exaltation of the Bible as the supreme authority more and more emphatic. In brief, it was in these years, we may venture to assert, that he came near to, or actually enunciated, most of the articles which in later times the Reformed Churches set in the forefront of their creeds. Severed from his association with the men who, for purposes of their own, had adopted some of his ideas and had endeavoured to use him as their tool, the Reformer point by point built up his scheme.

The outward sequence of events need make no very long recital. The " Babylonian Captivity " of the Pope had

terminated in 1376 ; and Gregory the Eleventh had in that year carried back the Papal Court to Rome. Two years later he bade the English Bishops summon Wiclif before them for heresy once more. Sudbury the Archbishop and Courtenay of London sat as Commissioners in obedience to the Pope's command,[1] the second of the two doubtless finding the business very decidedly to his mind ; and once again at Lambeth, as in the previous year at St. Paul's, Wiclif stood at the bar. And once again, at Lambeth as at St. Paul's, the trial came to nought. The Commissioners were hampered at the outset by a message from the widow of the Black Prince (it will be remembered that the Prince had died in 1376, that Edward the Third had followed him in 1377, and that Richard the Second, a boy of fifteen, was now on the throne) forbidding anything like a harsh judgment of the case. What Sudbury and Courtenay would have done under these embarrassing circumstances, had they been compelled to deliver any judgment at all, it is hard to say, though we can well believe that, notwithstanding the message, the stern and unflinching Courtenay would not have hesitated to proceed to extremes. However, the London mob repeated its interference of the preceding year, and the proceedings came to an abrupt close. Wiclif, as an angry and disappointed historian puts it, escaped " by the favour and care of the Londoners, notwithstanding the indisputably wicked character of his doctrines." [2]   It is possible, after this event, to mark a strengthening of Wiclif's tone, a certain quickening of his pace. He crowds activity on activity. It was about this time, and probably in connection with the distribution of copies of the Bible, that Wiclif's " poor priests " began to be sent through the length and breadth of the land. It was at this time (1378 is the actual date) that the great *Summa in theologia* alluded to just now—of which the treatise on " Dominion," written of course at an earlier time, forms, according to the final arrangement, the first seven books—grew to completeness

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[1] Lechler, *Wiclif and his English Precursors* (English Translation), pp. 171, 172.

[2] Thomas Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, i. 356. Walsingham is careful to insist that it was not the " respectable " citizens, but the " rabble," who intervened on Wiclif's behalf.

and was given to the world.   We cannot put it that Wiclif
was turning from a defensive to an aggressive attitude, for
he had been aggressive from the first ; but he struck harder
and more rapid blows.   The flame burned more fiercely.   It
seems as if, with hostile passion surging round him, he was
caught in its contagion, though he transmuted it, as it took
possession of him, into something finer far than the passion
of his foes.   The Papal schism of 1378, which was in some
respects a worse thing for the Papacy than even the
" Babylonian Captivity " itself, certainly more disastrous to
the standing of the Papacy in the eyes of men, heightened
Wiclif's opposition to the Papal system.   In March Gregory
died :   Urban the Sixth, elected as his successor, was
distasteful to the French Cardinals, and speedily made
himself yet more distasteful by his overbearing ways, the
result being that by September another Pope, calling himself
Clement the Seventh, was installed at Avignon—nearly
fifty years elapsing before the schism was healed.   Men saw
two rival Popes mutually hurling anathemas, each one claiming
that, in virtue of his commission as Vicar of Christ on earth,
he could excommunicate the other and all who acknowledged
the other's right.   Whatever hesitation Wiclif had felt in
proceeding to definite statements concerning the Pope's
wrong-doing now flashed away : the last trace of reverence
for the Papal system as such disappeared, the last sense of
any divinity hedging the occupant of the Papal throne
and protecting him from criticism ; and soon it is declared
not only that the Pope *might* sin, but that " Antichrist "
is the name he has legitimately earned.   From this
position it was but a short step to the declaration that
the position of the Papacy had been the source of all the
corruption of the Church ; and the attack upon the
degenerate Head of a degenerate priesthood led, by a
natural transition, to an attack upon the doctrine of Tran-
substantiation, which Wiclif, like later Reformers, rightly
recognised for the central citadel of a priesthood's strength.
In 1381 Wiclif published at Oxford his *Twelve Theses on
the Eucharist*—a master-stroke if the object was to force a
closer combat than any that had yet been waged.   The
closer combat was at once joined.   Dr. Barton, Chancellor

of Oxford, leapt to the fray, summoning a council by which Wiclif's heresy was unhesitatingly condemned—the condemnation being conveyed to Wiclif at the very moment when he was expounding his ideas in one of the Oxford lecture-rooms.[1] One pictures the scene as a dramatic one —the Chancellor or his messenger breaking in, with sudden demand for immediate and perpetual silence, upon Wiclif's earnest speech. Perhaps Wiclif had hoped for a different verdict, and had thought it possible that the University his learning had helped to make glorious would be on his side. Taken aback for the moment, he only said that, at any rate, his opponents could not prove his doctrines wrong. But if immediate silence fell, perpetual silence the Chancellor could not secure. An appeal made by Wiclif to the secular power (for, though no longer directly connected with any political party, the Reformer was still consistent in holding that the State had the right of stepping in to remedy the abuses of the Church) brought about no other result than a hurried rush to Oxford by John of Gaunt in order to enjoin upon the preacher that he must hold his peace.[2] To make Wiclif help him, and to appear as Wiclif's associate in beliefs accused of being blasphemous and false, were two very different things in John of Gaunt's eyes. Somewhat inconsistently, perhaps, Wiclif refused to abide by the judgment of the power to which he had himself appealed. He wrote the *De sacramento altaris* and the *Wicket*—the former, of course, in Latin, and the latter a more popular English presentment of his ideas—in defiance of the Duke's injunction, and necessarily to the further irritation of the dignitaries of the Church. Meanwhile in one of the tumultuous riots of the Peasants' Revolt Archbishop Sudbury had met his death, Courtenay of London, Wiclif's bitter and unrelenting opponent, succeeding him at Canterbury, and proceeding immediately to take fresh measures against the arch-heretic whom he hated and perhaps feared. In 1382 the " Synod of the Earthquake," [3] held at Blackfriars

[1] Lewis, *Life of Wiclif*, pp. 81-83.   [2] *Ibid.* p. 85.
[3] So called because an earthquake interrupted its proceedings. The phenomenon was interpreted by some as a sign in Wiclif's favour, and by some in the opposite sense. See Lechler, *Wiclif and his English Precursors* (English Translation), pp. 379 ff.

with Courtenay as its president (Wiclif himself did not appear), anathematised Wicliffism, and subsequently sent down a Commissioner to Oxford to see that the lips of heresy were kept sealed.   This latter act, however—although Oxford itself had condemned Wiclif—was resented by the University as a flagrant infringement of its rights ; and a quarrel, into whose details and variations of fortune we need not enter here, ensued upon the point.   In the end Courtenay won.   The followers of Wiclif were ruthlessly persecuted. Some of them went into hiding, and some broke down into recantation under the stress and strain.   Wiclif himself, rather curiously, was left alone.   He had once more appealed to the secular power just before the meeting of the Blackfriars Synod ; and it may be that the paper embodying his appeal, heavy in its strokes upon corrupt ecclesiasticism as a flail upon the threshing-floor, and sharp in its incisiveness as any two-edged sword,[1] did something, as Professor Montagu Burrows suggests,[2] by the impression it produced, to prevent Courtenay's myrmidons from laying hands upon the chief culprit of all.   But there were probably other causes.   Wiclif had been a great figure in other than University and theological spheres ; and it might not have been safe to go too far.   And his retirement to Lutterworth —where he had kept himself secluded since the Oxford condemnation of 1381—made it easier for his enemies to pass him by, if for other reasons they were disposed so to do.   It must not be supposed, however, that Wiclif's retirement to Lutterworth was in any degree due to fear.   For if he secluded his person, he did not subdue his voice ; and sermon after sermon, polemic after polemic, leapt from his pen.   Still, his enemies restrained the hands which doubtless ached to grip him.   Wiclif was spared—or shall we say, did not win ?—the martyr's crown.   What might have happened if the Power which supersedes all other powers had not put forth its hand we cannot guess.   In the end Pope Urban did summon Wiclif to meet and answer a charge of heresy at Rome.[3]   But the summons was futile.   It was not till the close of 1384 that it was issued ; and for Wiclif there

[1] It is called the " Complaint."   [2] *Wiclif's Place in History*, p. 121.
[3] Lewis, *Life of Wiclif*, p. 100.

was at the close of 1384 another summons to which the
Pope's had to give way. On 28th December, paralysis
struck the Reformer (not for the first time) as he was hear-
ing mass in the Lutterworth Parish Church ; and in the
Rectory to which he was immediately borne he passed away
with the passing of the year.

So brief a sketch as the foregoing of these crowded
years and their achievements necessarily leaves out many
things ; and a more detailed list of Wiclif's activities must
be sought in books specially devoted to the Reformer's life.
Many of his writings, both in Latin and in English, have
gone unmentioned.[1]   Quite apart from any work he may
have done in connection with Bible translation (and though
the amount of it is not known, he certainly did some)[2]
his literary work bulks largely.   His " poor priests," already
mentioned—a body of itinerant preachers whom Wiclif sent
through the country to propagate his doctrines, to circulate
the Scriptures, and to be a sort of counteracting influence
against that of the friars[3]—must have involved a vast
amount of supervising work, though their preliminary
organisation and training had doubtless been accomplished
in earlier Oxford days.   But all this we must, in its detail,
leave aside.   The important thing to notice here is the
essential unity of Wiclif's spirit in this period with the
spirit of the earlier period previously reviewed.   Although
he no longer has part or lot with John of Gaunt in any
political crusade, although he becomes more and more
aggressive and multiplies his activities with such fevered
haste and zeal, he stands all the while at the same centre
as before—the supreme importance of man's individual
relation with God—and reaches out from there to point
after point on the wide circumference of religious truth.
In his dealing with Transubstantiation, for instance, though
he recurs frequently to the philosophical contradictions
involved in the doctrine, his chief objection is that through

[1] See head of Section 4.

[2] See *Records of the English Bible*, edited by Alfred W. Pollard, p. 1.

[3] Wiclif had at first been friendly towards the friars, and some of them had
been at his side in the St. Paul's trial of 1377.   But the friars were pre-eminently
the emissaries of the Pope.   When Wiclif's quarrel with the Pope developed, he
necessarily became hostile to the friars too.   For Wiclif's itinerant system, see
Lechler, *Wiclif and his English Precursors* (English Translation), pp. 189-201.

the superstitions which have gathered round it the Sacrament has ceased to be a real communication of grace, a real influence upon the inner life, and has actually been turned into a source of spiritual degeneration and corruption instead. He stands, as it were, behind the veil which hides the mystic interchange of communion between God and man : he watches and watches there with concentrated gaze till he perceives how the doctrine held by the Church at large, as the waves of its reflex action flow back upon that interchange, cannot quicken it but can only retard ; and then, since the doctrine has failed to stand the supreme test, he condemns. The abstract and logical considerations which prove the doctrine false are not, with Wiclif, the primary concern. He comes to these afterwards, although no one can formulate and marshal them better than he when he once sets himself to the task. We might say that precisely because Wiclif discerns (what Protestantism, by the way, has very often failed to discern) the very truth enshrined in, or rather underlying, and yet perverted by, the doctrine of Transubstantiation does he feel it so necessary to fight the doctrine itself. That there must needs be a real communication of life and grace from God to man is the truth the Sacrament was intended to convey, and illustrate, and impress ; but in its effort to picture that communication, to make it vivid and comprehensible to men's minds, the doctrine of Transubstantiation has obliterated the line of distinction between the symbol and the things symbolised, has taught men that in receiving the material they are really receiving the spiritual and not the material at all— so reducing the whole Sacrament to a piece of jugglery and superstitious magic in which the pre-eminently important truth is forgotten and lost. A real communication of life and grace from God to man was precisely the thing for which Wiclif stood—for this is, essentially, as we have seen, what Wiclif's theory of " Dominion " means. But Transubstantiation is this idea tricked out in farcical robes, and rendered inoperative, and even ridiculous, thereby. This is at the back of Wiclif's treatment of the theme. And so with other things. To take another example, Wiclif set up the Bible as the final court of appeal, because he saw

with unerring insight that this central idea of his—the idea
of the supreme importance of man's individual relation with
God and its culture—was the Bible's own central idea.
And one might go the round of doctrinal treatment in his
company, finding that everywhere his principle is the same.
He controverted every doctrine he considered mistaken, and
advocated every doctrine he considered true, not so much
for the sake of the doctrine itself as for the sake of the
doctrine's effect upon the spiritual condition of those who
held it. He had, one may venture to assert, a higher
interest than even the interest of Truth. He is, of course,
not the only one of whom this could be said : it is true of
many Reformers of the world, and true of all the greatest
in the band. But so many, though they have started from
a spiritual standpoint more or less clearly marked out, have
in the end left it for a lower plane, and have come to take
the substitution of a true creed for a mistaken one as their
ultimate aim, so dropping the most heavenly qualities from
their work, allowing the gold of their zeal to become dim
and the most fine gold to change.[1] Wiclif took no such
downward step. He never quitted his high tower ; but from
its eminence continued to move the searchlight of his
supremely spiritual ideal round the whole horizon of
religious truth, and to scorch away all that could not
endure the blaze. Or, with change of figure, we may say
that Wiclif struck persistently on his one chord, commanding
silence on every chord that did not harmonise therewith.
Yet—and this also must be noted—this same concentra-
tion upon one central idea saved him from being a purely
negative or destructive or protestant intellectual force.
For, if man's individual relation with God was to be
cultivated, there must be spiritual forces employed for the
cultivating of it, and formulations of those forces and of the
methods in which they were to be used : the ways in which
God had related Himself and was still relating Himself to
man, so inviting and making possible a closer and deepening

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[1] "As Luther grew older his conception of faith became more and more
intellectual, till at last it comprised little beyond the assent of the mind to certain
articles of an orthodox creed."—Professor H. B. Workman, in *A New History of
Methodism*, i. 24. The statement is perhaps somewhat strong, but it contains a
great deal of truth.

relation on the part of man to God, must be defined ; and all this meant positive and constructive toil. Nothing could be further from the truth than Milman's extraordinary statement that Wiclif "was not merely premature as a Reformer of Christianity, but he was incomplete and insufficient. He was destructive of the existing system, not constructive of a new one."[1] Wiclif, indeed, was driven by his insistence on one point of doctrine (that being fraught with consequences which ran over the whole field) to deal with practically all the rest. He was obliged, because his conception of the Holy of Holies in his temple was so clear, to plan also all the approaches and all the outer courts. And he is, as a matter of fact, one of the most complete theological system-makers the world has ever seen.

In his later period, as in his earlier, Wiclif based all he said and did upon the affirmation that in the innermost of life man must derive all he is direct from God. From the leading of that affirmation he never broke away to run in paths where it did not show the way. But he never hung back, either, from any path into which that affirmation might draw his steps. He was a man of one idea—not in the sense that he was heedless of others, but in the sense that he served others only as they were themselves fitted to serve the one.

SECTION 6

The Later Lollardy

AUTHORITIES.—Local County and other Histories. Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. Lechler, in *Wiclif and his English Precursors*, has a chapter on the survival of Wiclif's influence. A brief summary is given in the closing chapters of Mr. Trevelyan's *England in the Age of Wiclif*. Mr. Trevelyan has also issued, in conjunction with Mr. Edgar Powell, some interesting documents from original sources, under the title *The Peasants' Rising and Lollards, Documents*. The Lollard documents in the volume, however, only range from 1382 to 1398. A good deal of information is contained in Book I of J. Gairdner's *Lollardy and the Reformation*. Rev. W. H. Summers gives some useful local history in *The Lollards of the Chiltern Hills*.

Wicliffism did not become an organised system, and there is but little history, at any rate in England, which can be said to descend in a direct line from Wiclif himself.

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[1] *History of Latin Christianity*, viii. 202.

Indeed, between Wicliffism and the Lollardy which followed
Wiclif, a clear line of distinction has to be drawn. As we
have seen, Wiclif was much more concerned to insist on the
fundamental principle, the fundamental spiritual source, out
of which all organisation should almost automatically arise,
than to establish any organisation of his own.   It was not
that, like George Fox in later days (though Fox as prophet
was, as we shall see, the most like-minded successor Wiclif
has ever had), Wiclif was antagonistic to organisation, or
concentrated upon only one of the really twin constituents,
organisation and life.   But a mere *construction* of the former
he would have held useless, glad as he would have been to
see its natural growth.   This was undoubtedly a testimony
to his depth of insight; his judgment of essential values ;
but it made it probable that, after he himself had disappeared
from the scene, elements of weakness would be disclosed
among those who professed to be his disciples, and that his
fundamental idea would to a great extent drop out of view.
Wicliffism was by no means a negative thing : it had, at
any rate in germ, a whole range of positive implications
covering the entire ground, contained within it ; but it
would necessarily wear a negative appearance to some who
could only with difficulty take hold upon abstract ideas.
Wiclif dug so deeply for his positive foundation that many
might easily be unable to see down so far, and might look
upon the master's process as destructive alone.   It was
scarcely to be expected that, under these conditions,
Wicliffism would perpetuate itself in what we may perhaps
call Wiclif's own " grand manner," full-bodied and complete,
touching with recreative hand upon every point of religious
thought and life.   Had Wiclif founded a new Church, there
would have been something very tangible on which smaller
men, who craved the visible, might have taken hold.   And
for the average man something like this is the more necessary
when it is under persecution (as in this case it was) that a
position has to be maintained.   The thing for which a man
faces suffering and death must, as a general rule, be very
definite indeed.   The doctrine of " Dominion," even when
translated into its most popular form, remained far too refined
and abstract for the general mind.   As a consequence, men

remembered and repeated the protests into which Wiclif had been driven by his dominating idea—his charges against the existing system of things—but did comparatively little toward the further development, or even for the maintenance, of that dominating idea itself. Without depreciating the witnesses and martyrs who right on to the time of Henry the Eighth held up the Lollard flag, we may truly say that Lollardy is not quite the same thing as Wicliffism properly so called. Wiclif's protests, his attacks upon the abuses and corruptions by which the Church was befouled, are echoed and re-echoed in these later voices : Wiclif's greatest and sublimest affirmation is not proclaimed with any trumpet-tongue. The fact is easily explainable, and implies no disparagement of the Lollard [1] names upon the roll of heroes who have been faithful unto death. But it is the historian's duty, when he is tracing the vicissitudes in the development and revelation of a certain spirit, to note that the fact exists.

Nevertheless, if Lollardy was not precisely Wicliffism, it was, so to say, a not very distant relation of Wicliffism, and preserved something of Wiclif's thought and spirit, though not the whole, through the years which intervened till Lutheranism came from Germany to our shores. Protests against many of the religious and ecclesiastical corruptions were constantly being made. Transubstantiation was repeatedly denied. The authority of the Scriptures, and the right of every man to study them for himself, were affirmed ever and again. Lollardy, in fact, stood for a simple and genuine piety against an elaborated superstition which masqueraded in religious robes. Never, from Wiclif's own death till the reign of Henry the Eighth, does the line of witnesses quite fail. It was natural that in Leicestershire, since Wiclif's rectory of Lutterworth stood in that county, the new doctrines should be most widely spread. The " poor priests " were active round about the district in which their founder lived. The Lollards had their own particular chapel in Leicester town; but in other Leicester churches also Lollard emissaries proclaimed their faith. A man named Swynderby,

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[1] " Lollard " probably signifies " babbler," or something similar, and was a name given in scorn.

at any rate, found his way to many pulpits, though the fear of imprisonment and death landed him in recantation in 1382.[1] John Purvey, one of Wiclif's assistants in the translation of the Bible, lived with Wiclif in the rectory, and naturally wielded a great influence through his nearness to the Head.[2] Another thing which gave impetus to the heretical doctrine was the fact that not a few of the local gentlemen and estate-owners embraced Wiclif's views, and stood with more or less boldness on his side. So fast and far did the thing grow that in 1389 Courtenay took pronounced measures, and by interdict and excommunication succeeded in bringing a good many wandering sheep back into the fold, and in driving into secrecy and silence the majority of those who would not conform.[3] Meanwhile, however, a fresh field for Lollard successes had been found in the West. The actual beginning of Lollardy in that region is not to be traced ; but after Wiclif's death Purvey is found there ;[4] and William Swynderby, having recanted at Leicester, and then apparently recanted his recantation, also appears upon the scene.[5] For a time, at least, the Lollardy of the West was strong. Most important of all was the strength of the new sect in the capital. There, where the recollection of Wiclif's national service in the matter of the Papal tribute was sure to be most strong, where bitterness towards the ecclesiastics with whom Lollardy was at war was sure to be most keen, the Parliament hung back from drastic steps, let the Bishops in their wrath clamour as they might. Indeed, so secure did the heretics feel themselves that in 1395 their leaders formally presented their articles of belief to Parliament, and even nailed them upon the door of St. Paul's.[6] This daring act, however, proved the undoing of London Lollardy ; for the angry Bishops sent for King Richard from Ireland, where he was engaged in an irritating and failing campaign, and, turning to their own uses the bad temper in which they found him,

[1] Lewis, *Life of Wiclif*, pp. 222-226.   [2] *Ibid.* pp. 218-221.
[3] Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), iii. 212.
[4] Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wiclif* (ed. 1909), p. 323.
[5] *Ibid.* pp. 323, 324. Lewis (*Life of Wiclif*, p. 228) doubts the whole story of Swynderby's recantation. But it is probably true.
[6] Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wiclif* (ed. 1909), pp. 327-329.

brought him back to fall upon the pernicious doctrines with a strong arm.[1]   In London, as in Leicestershire, Lollardy went under—was at any rate compelled to hide its head. That Richard was proud of his achievement may be inferred from the inscription which, in advance of his own death, he had placed upon his Westminster Abbey tomb.   " He over-threw the heretics and laid their friends low."   So the inscription runs.   The modern visitor, as he looks upon it, finds it suggestive, not only of Richard's character, but of a much larger theme—of the certainty, which in this instance as in others history has so amply established—that

> Truth crushed to earth shall rise again ;
> The eternal years of God are hers.[2]

We may pass rapidly over the following hundred years. The reign of Henry the Fourth (1399-1413) saw the first actual Lollard martyrdoms.   The "Statute of Heretics" was passed in Henry's second year ;[3] and, though it only legalised or emphasised a power which had existed before, it necessarily made, for the adherents of the Lollard doctrines, a fiercer strain and test.   The earlier disciples of Wiclif, even some of the chief among them (though any man of the present day may well hesitate before he casts a stone), had perhaps been somewhat over-ready to recant.   Purvey him-self, Wiclif's close friend, was unable in 1401 to face the last ordeal.[4]   But the age of weakness overlapped the age of strength ; for three days before Purvey's recantation a man named William Sawtrey, for heresy on Transubstantiation, had been burned alive.[5]   The next reign, that of Henry the Fifth (1413-1422), took up persecution in yet more strenuous fashion ;   and now neither rank nor wealth, which had formerly secured something like immunity for their possessors, were of any avail.   Sir John Oldcastle, who had been a personal friend of the King, was brought to trial and con-demned.   Having effected his escape, he called his friends to arms (thus becoming rebel as well as heretic), only to be

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[1] Lewis, *Life of Wiclif*, pp. 198, 199.
[2] William Cullen Bryant.
[3] Wilkins' *Concilia*, iii. 252-254 ; Lingard, *History of England* (ed. 1855), iii. 232.
[4] Gairdner, *Lollardy and the Reformation*, i. 52-54.
[5] *Ibid.* i. 51, 52.

captured again and to suffer the appointed doom.[1] It is
little wonder that persecution should have made the per-
secuted turn in self-defence, and that in this way Lollardy
should have seemed (not quite without justification in some
cases) to have taken on the colour of rebellion in the eyes of
prejudiced observers. It is little wonder, either, that after
the death of a man like Sir John Oldcastle the wealthier
and more prominent adherents of the sect should have
gradually fallen away, and that Lollardy should have come
to find its followers principally among the masses of ordinary
men. Yet among the masses of ordinary men it at least
held its own, if not more. For in the time of Henry the
Sixth (1422-1461) we find that in the Eastern Counties,
where at first it had been unable to get any grip at all,
Lollardy was widely diffused;[2] and in this district names
not a few were added to the martyr-roll. During the Wars
of the Roses the political condition of the country probably
occupied the minds of men to the exclusion of everything
else, for in this period only a small number of references to
heresy or prosecutions for heresy are found. But when in
the reign of Henry the Seventh (1485-1509) political affairs
had once more quieted down, we find a revival on the part
of Lollardy and of its opponents;[3] and, if Lollardy has
invaded no new districts, in its old strongholds, at least, it
has kept its sway. So a spirit which was akin to the spirit
of Wiclif had survived through all the decades. And now
came the hour when whatever of purer doctrine existed
in England was to be reinforced by the coming of purer
doctrine from Germany, and when a fresh chapter in our
religious history was to be begun. Lutheranism, as it
passed over to England and made its appeal and won its
way, inevitably absorbed the existing protestant element into
itself; for it came with a force of reasoned argument which
Lollardy did not wield, and with a consequent appeal to
educated men which Lollardy could not exert. It had the
future, and must come to its own. No great scholar or

[1] Lewis, *Life of Wiclif*, pp. 201-205; Lingard, *History of England* (ed.
1855), iii. 236, 237, 253.
[2] Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wiclif* (ed. 1909), p. 341.
[3] *Ibid.* pp. 347 ff. See also the *Political History of England*, v. 137-139
(H. A. L. Fisher).

writer had arisen to wear Wiclif's mantle.   The Lollard
movement had had its hour and lived out its span.   Yet
Lollardy had done its work.   It had lit its torch from
Wiclif's great lamp, and had kept the cresset burning not
too feebly, till by Luther's hand a great light was kindled
once more.   And, indeed, through Luther the Continent did
but give back to England what the Continent had received
from England long before.   It was from Wiclif's lamp that
the Continental Reformation had obtained its first flame.
The merging of Lollardy into Protestantism commonly so
called was after all but the renunion of two streams which
had originally sprung from a single source.   It may be,
indeed, that in some congregations the Wicliffite tradition,
as such, maintained itself more strictly than it is possible
to prove.   We know that at a comparatively late date—
certainly after Lutheranism had made its first strides—some
communities remained upon which German influence had
not come ; it is Wiclif's name and Wiclif's books with
which, according to their own testimony and that of their
enemies, they are associated still.[1]   It is established, besides,
that a large proportion of those who suffered martyrdom
under Mary came from districts where Lollardy had been
strong.   And perhaps (though it can be no more than a
vague guess) the isolated congregations with which we meet
later on in the time of Edward the Sixth and Mary, and
which are the first definitely " separated " religious bodies that
appear in our history—these, perhaps, though not calling
themselves Lollards or Wicliffites, may have been connected
in some real way with the Lollardy of earlier years, and may
have represented the new uprising of some Lollard tradition
which had never wholly died, and which was ready, on
occasion, to embody itself once more.

SECTION 7

Final Estimate of Wiclif

Perhaps the most dominant impression made upon the
student by a survey of Wiclif's life is the impression of his

[1] Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wiclif* (ed. 1909), pp. 349, 350.

absolute loneliness, of the far remove at which he stands, not
only from all who went before, but from all who came after.
The final verdict upon him, in fact, must be this—first, that
he was a man far in advance of his time, and next, that he
was a man with whom time had not even yet caught up.
The second statement may move to some sense of surprise
those who assent unthinkingly to the customary claim that
all the product of the more ancient years has been adopted
and improved upon in the product of the modern time; yet
it is a statement which a study of our religious history must
uphold.

That Wiclif was far in advance of his time has been
made sufficiently evident.   His intellectual originality is
signal.   He did not merely accept and refine upon current
ideas.   It has already been said that whatever ideas he took
from any of his predecessors he so worked over, so set into
fresh relations with a central conception, that they became
practically new.   In connection with Wiclif's doctrine of
" Dominion," what he obtains from FitzRalph of Armagh is
little more than the name.   His doctrine of " evangelical
poverty " was in the first instance Occam's ; but Wiclif is so
little bound to Occam that he uses the doctrine for the
purpose of commending the friars,[1] whereas Occam had used
it in a precisely opposite sense.[2]   Grossetête of Lincoln and
Marsiglio of Padua [3] had dared, before Wiclif's time, to set
themselves in opposition to the Papacy ; and Occam too
had put forward a theory of society, and of the Church's
relation to society, which involved the doctrine that the
Pope might err.   But Grossetête had opposed the Pope,
not so much on general principles, as because in particular
cases he thought the Pope's authority was being exercised
to secure wrong results ; while Marsiglio and Occam had
worked from the standpoint of the world as it was—
from a consideration of the disadvantages inherent in
the existing supremacy of the Pope over the civil power,
rather than from the spiritual standpoint which Wiclif, even

[1] This was of course in the earlier days, before Wiclif's quarrel with them.
[2] Occam declared that the friars violated the law by begging, while Wiclif
held that they kept the law by depending upon charity.
[3] In Pope Gregory's Bull against Wiclif (*Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, ed. Shirley,
pp. 242-244) the latter is spoken of as reviving some of Marsiglio's heresies.

when he touched such themes as this, always took up. Marsiglio and Occam were, in fact, social and political theorists rather than prophets in the sense in which Wiclif is entitled to the prophetic name.[1]   Wiclif is unique in that he retreats, so to say, far from the world in order to gain a platform from which he may reconstruct the world—and how unimportant, when once this is grasped, all superficial resemblances between some of his ideas and those of his predecessors must become, may easily be estimated.   He is in advance of his time, also, in that he never, as has been previously stated, takes at any juncture the obvious reforming course.   Our survey of the England into which he came, coupled with our subsequent survey of his work, shows that his work was scarcely that for which Englishmen of his day would have looked.   From the social, political, and ecclesiastical disorganisation that ran riot round him, Wiclif went back to first principles—having to traverse, in order to reach them, a long road over which ordinary men could not be expected to keep step with him, and upon which, indeed, they might hesitate to set their feet.   It was the times that called him : yet he hardly met the need of the time as the time itself would have interpreted its need —though, as from our later view-point we can see, it was for this very reason that he served his own time and all other times so well.   He was in all things outside of, certainly unmastered by, the prevalent intellectual atmosphere or the moment's clamour.   He possessed himself.   He was in only the smallest possible degree a man of his time.

This, of course, accounts for his comparative failure. His greatness was too wonderful : the age could not stretch itself to a height so towering.   Yet by this very greatness he prepared the way for a good deal that was to come.   It is only in a relative and limited sense that the word failure can be used in connection with Wiclif, after all.   Continental affairs do not come within our scope ; but we may at least repeat what was said just now—that from Wiclif the Continent derived what later on the Continent gave back to

[1] Nevertheless, Marsiglio most remarkably anticipated, in his *Defensor pacis*, many doctrines of the Reformation, and even of later times.   He is not nearly so well known as he ought to be.   For a concise account of his theories, consult R. Lane Poole's *Illustrations of the History of Mediæval Thought*, pp. 263-276.

us. John Huss, the reformer of Bohemia, founded himself upon Wiclif's life and work—so that from Wiclif to Huss, from Huss to Luther, and from Luther back to Wiclif's England again, the line can easily be drawn. Wiclif was great enough to mould in no inconsiderable degree a move- ment that came to its fruition more than a century after his death. Moreover, if his work was too great to be im- mediately understood, it was also too great to be quite without immediate and thereafter continuous effect ; and it is no small thing that he inspired a Lollardy which kept some elements of Wicliffism alive at home until Reformation days. In this way there was preserved for the nation's life a spiritual element which was surely supremely necessary in view of the conditions under which the Reformation in England was ultimately effected, and in view of the character of the King under whose not very exalted inspiration England at last broke away from Rome. One speculates indeed with interest as to what the course of history would have been had England been ready to walk in Wiclif's ways. Milton had a vision of an England as it might have been— an England which was the actual pioneer and producer, not merely the prophet, of the Protestantism of the world. " And had it not been the obstinate perverseness of our prelates against the divine and admirable spirit of Wiclif, to suppress him as a schismatic and innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Huss and Jerome, no, nor the name of Luther or of Calvin, had ever been known : the glory of reforming all our neighbours had been completely ours. But now, as our obdurate clergy have with violence demeaned the matter, we are become hitherto the latest and backwardest scholars, of whom God offered to have made us the teachers." [1] Surely we cannot but mourn over the forfeited chance ! Perhaps, had England listened, all the long conflicts between denomination and denomination, between Church and Church, would have been escaped : perhaps the bitter drama of struggle through which Non- conformity won its standing-ground would have remained unacted : perhaps acceptance of the one great idea would have settled differences about subsidiary ideas once for all.

[1] *Areopagitica* (*Prose Works*, ed. Bohn, ii. 91).

Perhaps, also—since Wiclif was essentially philosopher as well as theologian—perhaps, had England listened, the development of religious life and thought might have kept in touch with the development of philosophy ; and the sad divorce between religion and philosophy, which has worked more harm than is easily to be gauged, might have been spared. But England did not listen, and the harvests of gain her listening would have sown are, many of them, still ungrown upon our fields. It was not to be. But the greatness of the " might have been " only goes to show how great a man Wiclif was. He stands alone.

And it is his isolation, his uniqueness, so long maintained, that has made it necessary to speak of him at length. He derives his supreme significance from the fact that no one shares his lonely eminence—that he has scaled a peak on whose steep ascent others have grown sooner tired. He was in advance of his own time. But that is for us a comparatively small matter. He is in advance of ours. If historically we look back to him, yet spiritually, ideally, we see him beckoning to us from the distance ahead. For a survey of his life and work enables us to say again what was said at the outset—that in him the paramount Nonconformist principle found in some respects a clearer and more adequate expression than at any subsequent period it received. He wrought out his entire system round the central conception of the inner life, its essential nature and its essential needs. It was at this its first emergence that the Nonconformist spirit showed itself in fulness of purity and power. And so Wiclif becomes the standard whereby the Nonconformist spirit, in all its subsequent manifestations, must submit to be judged.

CHAPTER II

THE QUASI-REFORMATION UNDER HENRY VIII

SECTION 1

The Sixteenth Century and the Modern Age

WHEN we reach the reign of Henry the Eighth, we find
ourselves dealing with events and ideas which have a certain
familiarity for us in their look. That is, the problems and
occurrences of the time have a direct and usually more or
less traceable connection with the problems and occurrences
of our own time : many of the methods adopted in dealing
with the problems, many of the ideas thrown up to the surface
in the process, many of the arrangements established, remain
with us, if not precisely in their original form, at any rate in
forms that may be termed their near kith and kin. Or
perhaps one is nearer the mark in saying that from this time
onward the stream of historic movement is continuous in a
sense in which we hardly find it to be continuous if we start
further up toward the source. Historians, indeed, vary a
good deal in their choice of the point at which " modern "
history takes its rise ; and there is no need to insist that the
" modern " period, strictly so called, actually begins in Henry
the Eighth's reign. But, once we pass into that reign, we
are no longer conscious of that sense of remoteness which
stays with us through all our studies of times further back.
We obtain, in regard to the men of this period, a much more
vivid realisation of the fact that they lived in the same world
as that in which we live, than we do, for instance, in regard
to the men of Wiclif's age. The line of descent from them
to us runs straight. Probably the invention of printing,
together with the quickening of thought so intimately con-

nected with it or in part even caused by it, goes far to account
for this.   The growth of ideas, when the results of thought
came to be perpetuated upon the printed page, and so
permeated the masses of men in a fashion which only now
became possible, would necessarily assume a more steady
and even character, would become much more of a regular
evolution than it had been, and would move on through
successive stages which, because they were strictly and really
" generations " as they came down, can be, like other " genera-
tions," traced back.   There would be, in fact, an actual
general movement of thought in a sense in which no such
movement had existed before—a movement which would
prepare the way for the discoveries and conceptions of the
greater minds and at the same time preserve those discoveries
and conceptions, after they were reached, as part of the
common stock ; so that even the exceptional men and
exceptional ideas, as they stand in line from this age onwards,
clasp hands with one another and with us.   They are entirely
isolated, sporadic, no more, as the exceptional men and
exceptional ideas of the earlier ages had been, or had seemed
to be.   The " movement " is before them, and beneath them,
and after them ; and, exceptional as they are, they are embraced
in the continuity of the whole.   And this continuity of
thought involves, of course, something of continuity in the
methods and organisations through which, in the spheres
wherein such tangible things were called for, thought worked
out its results.   It is but natural that the time of Henry the
Eighth should seem to connect itself with us much more
closely and continuously than earlier times appear to do.

In the indicated sense, then, there was, in the time with
which we are dealing, a definite beginning of some of the
movements, tendencies, organisations, and arrangements that
have persisted until now.   Specially in the religious sphere
is this found to be the case.   In that department the line of
continuity runs clear.   It is important, therefore, that our
understanding of the new religious beginning of that period
should be carefully wrought out, in order that we may be
able to decide the question whether it was rightly made, and
may perceive how, by its rightness or wrongness, the religious
history of later centuries was affected for good or ill.   There

were, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, three forces at work, any one of which might have served as an impelling and directing power in the religious sphere.   The student needs to pass them in review, and to ascertain which of them did finally take the task of moulding religious development into its hands.

SECTION 2

The Revival of Learning

AUTHORITIES.—Jortin's *Life of Erasmus*, Lupton's *Life of Colet*, and Roper's *Life of More*.   Sir Thomas More is one of the " three " dealt with in Stapleton's *Tres Thomae*.   The works of Erasmus may be studied either in Froben's edition, or in the Leyden edition, edited by Le Clerc.   The " Letters " are in the third volume of the latter edition.   A translation of some of the most characteristic ones has been made by F. M. Nichols in *The Letters of Erasmus*, which also contains biographical notes explaining and connecting the letters.   A good account of Colet, More, and Erasmus is contained in Frederic Seebohm's *Oxford Reformers*, and much valuable information in Gasquet's *Eve of the Reformation*.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century we find ourselves in a quite different world (the allusion at the moment is made from the intellectual side alone) from that of the previous chapter.   One may say of the period, in regard to its intellectual condition, what was just now said of it in a general sense—that we have a much more vivid sense of its affinity with our own than we have in regard to the period in which Wiclif lived.   The community, as a whole, had come to life on the mental side.   Knowledge, thought, education, were being diffused, not indeed to the same extent, but in the same direction, as they are being diffused to-day. They were no longer the exclusive prerogatives of the few : men had, as it were, come into possession of their minds, were able to use them more freely, and at the same time owned a larger wealth of material on which to exercise their newly awakened powers.   It is not implied, of course, that knowledge and education were either spread so wide or driven so deep as they are now, or that the lowest of the social strata were touched by them, or that everybody had either desire or opportunity to pass through the gates of the larger intellectual world.   But there was a definite beginning, upon the stagnant intellectual waters, of those ripples which have spread in ever-widening circles from then till now, and have

still to spread. And, if one searches for causes, one perceives that in the " Revival of Learning " did the chief producing cause of the new intellectual birth reside. Allusion has already been made to the invention of printing[1] as an instrument in the quickening of the general thought ; and its effect in this direction is not to be denied. But even the invention of printing would have accomplished comparatively little unless other influences had been conjoined therewith. Something it would have done in any case : the multiplication of treatises of even the strictly scholastic kind would to some extent have aroused intellectual interest, although the audiences to which such treatises appealed could have been only scanty ; and from those immediately affected something of the fresh mental contagion, if it may be so put, would have been communicated to the rest. But the net result of it must have remained relatively small. It was through the coming of " humanism "—through the marvellous resurrection of the Greek and Latin writers from the grave of forgetfulness in which for so long men had contentedly let them lie— through the renaissance of literature properly so called—and through the happy coincidence of this with the coming of the printing-press—that a new intellectual era dawned for England as for the entire Western world. The Revival of Learning was, in fact, one of the great constructive forces of the time—and on its religious side, in its religious implications and applications and consequences was (as one discerns on looking back) the first of the three powers under whose guidance the religious future of the land might have been shaped.

The movement made a somewhat later start in England than abroad—naturally so, when the geographical situation is taken into account. In Italy, Greek studies had been vigorously pursued since the fall of Constantinople in 1453 had sent a stream of emigrant teachers and scholars westward from the east. Even before this, Italy had known something of a literary renaissance : the collapse of the eastern empire fed and fanned, rather than kindled, the flame. So far back as the years between 1397 and 1400 Manuel Chrysoloras had taught Greek at Florence ; and

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[1] Caxton settled in England in 1476 after living in Flanders for thirty years.

from this time, onward to the fuller intellectual developments of the middle of the fifteenth century, a succession of names makes a series of milestones along the road. Moreover, three of the Constantinople emperors,[1] as Gibbon tells us, came before the final catastrophe to seek succour in their fight against the Mohammedan attack ; and although in their primary object they failed, their visits gave additional impetus to the Greek studies already begun. When, after the catastrophe of 1453, the stronger tide of westward emigration set in, it found the ground prepared. It was, however, at the commencement of the sixteenth century that England came to any considerable extent under the spell. Isolated instances there had been previously of Greek influence reaching forth its hand so far as England, and of England going forth to put herself under the Greek touch. Greece came to England when in 1400 Manuel, the second of the three emperors, extended his pilgrimage, politically so unavailing, to our shores, and when in 1408 Chrysoloras, spoken of above, spent a brief time in London. England put herself under Greek influence through such visits to the Italian schools as those paid by Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, and by ecclesiastics like John Free and William Gray, Bishop of Ely.[2] Later on (in 1466) two monks, Selling and Hadley by name, took a course of study at Bologna ; and Selling, who subsequently was made Prior at Canterbury, and held the office from 1472 to 1495, became one of the most influential forerunners of the revival at home. By the beginning of the new century, however, we find constellations of scholars instead of these scattered stars. At Oxford— which had been Selling's University—we come upon the names of Grocyn, Linacre, and William Lilly ;[3] while at Cambridge, the coming of Erasmus in 1510, and the influence he speedily established there, led to a pursuit of Greek studies which, even after Erasmus' departure, went on from strength to strength, a readership in Greek being

[1] John the First, Manuel, and John Palæologus. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. lxvi.

[2] On these, and on Selling's work at Canterbury, see Gasquet, *The Eve of the Reformation*, chap. ii.

[3] G. C. Brodrick, *History of the University of Oxford*, p. 71. Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*.

officially established in the University in 1519. Cambridge,
in fact, has just at this time a longer list of Greek scholars
than Oxford to show, the names of Richard Croke, Sir
Thomas Smith, John Cheke, and Roger Ascham standing
out upon the roll of this and the adjacent decades.[1]　It
must be remembered, however, that although in this brief
recital the study of Greek is particularly emphasised, and
although the Greek language with its literature was in a
special sense the discovery, or rather the re-discovery, of the
time, humanism was a thing of no narrow range.　Round
the whole circle of learning the new spirit swept with its
revivifying power : the study of Greek was but one sign of
a new intellectual ardour by which all other studies bene-
fited in their turn : it is, indeed, as an emancipation of the
human mind from the shackles of scholasticism, with its
absorption in the business of raking over the old logical
dust-heaps again and again, and as the wakening in the
human mind of the instinct of exploration and curiosity,
that the new movement may, perhaps, be best described ;
and the fact that in the year 1540 Henry the Eighth
established at Oxford the Chairs of Medicine, Divinity,
Civil Law, and Hebrew, in addition to that of Greek,[2]
serves to indicate how wide the outlook was.　And the
Revival of Learning was not a matter for the Universities
alone.　To no inconsiderable extent its effect passed upon
the outside world.　Sir Thomas More, who had been an
Oxford student, destined by his father for the bar, had been
removed by his anxious parent from the University because
the youth showed signs of caring more for the study of Greek
literature than for applying himself to the ordinary scholastic
lines.[3]　But the precaution came too late ; and More,
through his career as a man of affairs, and through his
Utopia, his great literary offering to his age, both com-
mended and imparted to not a few that spirit of humanism
by which he was himself so completely possessed.　In
education, also, the new movement told ; and in 1510, the
year in which Erasmus commenced his teaching of Greek

[1] H. C. and T. Cooper, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*.

[2] Brodrick, *History of the University of Oxford*, p. 78.

[3] Erasmus, *Ep.* 447 (Leyden edition of *Works*, iii. 475).

at Cambridge, Colet founded St. Paul's School, appointing the William Lilly before mentioned to the headmaster's place.[1] Moreover, the great outburst of creative and imaginative literature in the Elizabethan age was in great measure a consequence of this revived interest in the literature of the older world. The Revival of Learning was not operative exclusively in the academic seats of learning strictly so called, though there its first and most patent effects must of course be sought. Directly or indirectly, through some primary or some secondary influence, it entered deeply into every part of the nation's life.

It is, however, with the religious side of the literary revival that we are here most concerned. A religious side it was bound to have. The close study of classical authors implied the rise of criticism in something like the modern sense of the term ; and the critical method, having once obtained a footing, could not but pass on from the study of secular writings to the study of the Scriptures themselves. Scholars who were devoted to the recovery and exposition of Greek texts, and who trained themselves in the habits which these processes required, necessarily approached the question of the Bible (and the impulse which drove them to the secular study would drive them to the religious study too) in a manner totally different from that which had hitherto prevailed. In this sphere, as in the sphere of classical learning, there was born the desire to disentangle the original intention of the writers dealt with, to study them at first hand rather than through the coloured glass of the interpretations which subsequent authorities had decreed. The name of Erasmus is the outstanding name in this regard. His edition of the New Testament, published some time between 1514 and 1522,[2] though produced under many disadvantages, and of comparatively little value when judged by the modern standard, was remarkable in that it dared to suggest possible " corrections " in the Vulgate— the Vulgate being the officially recognised version, bearing the *imprimatur* of the Church, and consequently being considered by practically all as giving the Scripture in its final

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[1] Lupton's *Life of Colet* (ed. 1909), p. 170.
[2] Jortin, *Life of Erasmus*, i. 76.

form. Erasmus' version was a definite assertion, though a
poor exemplification, of the critical method applied to sacred
literature. Many saw at once that this sudden intrusion of
criticism into a realm which had hitherto been held sacred
as the preserve of religion's official spokesmen portended a
good deal—that, in fact, the spirit of the humanistic move-
ment, should religion's gate be so slackly guarded as once
to let it through, was fraught with threatening against the
power of ecclesiastical authority over the minds of men.
Martin Dorpius, of the University of Louvain, voiced the
fear of many when he wrote to Erasmus, saying that in
expurgating the epistles of St. Jerome from "the many
errors with which they abound," Erasmus had performed a
work "by which you will confer a benefit on divines."
"But," he went on, "I hear, also, that you have been
correcting the text of the New Testament, and that you
have made annotations not without theological value on
more than one thousand places."[1] This Dorpius could not
endure. He was keen enough to see the direction in which
it was sure to lead ; and his protest goes straight to the
point. "It cannot be," he says, "that the unanimous
universal Church now for so many centuries has been
mistaken, which always has used, and still both sanctions
and uses this version (the Vulgate)." Dorpius was, of course,
right in suspecting a scarcely-veiled threat against the
authority of the Church in the critical processes which
Erasmus, in however imperfect and limited a fashion, had
begun to apply to the New Testament books. The cloud
might be no bigger than a man's hand, but as a sign of
what was to come it spoke clearly enough. Still, Erasmus
was not without encouragement. Archbishop Warham,
Bishop Tunstall, Bishop Fisher, and Colet warmly con-
gratulated the worker and approved the work ; and against the
Martin Dorpius mentioned just now Sir Thomas More ener-
getically entered the lists.[2] That the commendation of such
men was won is significant of the new spirit which was abroad.

That Erasmus himself was conscious of the theological

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[1] A translation of the letter, with part of Erasmus' reply, may be found in
F. Seebohm, *Colet, Erasmus, and More*, pp. 314-318.
[2] Jortin, *Life of Erasmus*, i. 76.

consequences to which his method must lead is abundantly
clear, though whether he was willingly or unwillingly conscious
of them is another matter altogether. He did not, indeed,
shrink from setting them out in plain words : what Dorpius
mildly termed " annotations not without theological value "
have their " theological value " expressly given to them in
more places than one. His language is occasionally such as
a most pronounced Protestantism might be content to
employ ; and in regard to certain things which were looked
upon by the Roman Catholic Church as fundamental he
issues what at first reads like a challenge and a defiance.
" The Church," Erasmus said, " was the congregation of all
men throughout the whole world who agreed in the faith of
the Gospel. As to the Lord's Supper, he saw neither good
nor use in a body imperceptible to the senses ; and he found
no place in Scripture which said that the Apostles had
consecrated bread and wine into the body and blood of the
Lord. . . . Ceremonies were positive laws made by Bishop
or Councils, Popes or Orders which could not supersede the
laws of nature or of God." [1] In saying these things, the
same writer proceeds, Erasmus " was governed by this
historical idea : things unknown to the New Testament
were unnecessary to the Christian religion ; what contradicted
the mind of Christ or hindered the realisation of His ends
was injurious to His Church." All this, whether Erasmus
realised it or not, amounted to an attack upon really vital
parts of the existing system ; and such ideas of these are to
be found in profusion in Erasmus' works. Nor did he stand
alone. Colet, though dealing less directly with dogma than
did Erasmus in his "annotations not without theological value"
and in his other works, surveyed the circle of religious thought
with a freedom and penetratingness of gaze which led him
to corresponding freedom and penetratingness of speech.
The profoundly spiritual nature of the man induced him in
many a sermon—even when he was preaching before Royalty
or clergy—to exalt the supreme importance of a really
religious life over that of ecclesiastical machinery, and by
implication, if not by express statement, to relegate mere
" official " religion, so to call it, into a quite secondary rank.

[1] Dr. A. M. Fairbairn, in *The Cambridge Modern History*, ii. 699.

How greatly Colet's spirituality impressed those most com-
petent to judge may be gathered from the fact that Erasmus
always spoke of Colet's great work as having been the "im-
planting of Christ" in the hearts of men and women, boys
and girls, learned and unlearned, alike.[1]   And that the
danger of Colet's preaching, no less than the danger of
Erasmus' writing, was recognised by not a few partisans of
things as they were may be inferred from the fact that after
a sermon to Convocation in 1512 Colet was accused of
heresy by his bishop,[2] though Archbishop Warham dismissed
the charge with something like contempt.   One rejoices, of
course, in Warham's protection of Colet ; but that Colet's
bishop was right in considering Colet's preaching to contain
at least the seed of what the Roman authorities would be
compelled to call heresy, there can be no manner of doubt.
Colet did not hesitate to denounce abuses and to demand
reforms ; but still more significant, perhaps (and the
sensitiveness of those committed to the defence of the
established order would quickly become aware of the
significance), was the constant and particular stress he laid
upon the inwardness of true religion ; for in this some
depreciation of the whole sacerdotal and ecclesiastical
system was of necessity involved.   As with many pioneers
in the world of thought, so with Colet, it was possibly not so
much what was said, as what was left unsaid, that might
well make the critics suspiciously watchful and alert.   And
as one catches many of the ringing utterances which Colet
sent forth from his pulpit and which Erasmus set down in
his books, and remembers that these men were the repre-
sentative men of the Revival of Letters on its religious side,
one feels that the Revival of Letters on its religious side,
had it seized its opportunities, might have made the religious
future of the land, might have made it greatly, and might,
by pressing its own particular controversy, have prevented
many of the controversies which subsequently arose.   Not
only Protestantism, but Nonconformist Protestantism, lay
in embryo here.   The promise of an entire re-construction

[1] See Erasmus' eulogy of Colet (and comparison of him with a Franciscan,
Joannes Vitriarius), in Jortin's *Life of Erasmus*, iii. 14-25.

[2] Bishop Fitzjames.   Colet was Dean of St. Paul's from 1505 to his death in
1519.   See Lupton's *Life of Colet* (ed. 1909), pp. 203, 204.

of religious thought and life, and of ecclesiastical organisation also, was wrapped up in the movement.   The beginning of nothing less than a religious revolution, of an actual and thorough recreation of religion, was there.   To such men as Erasmus and Colet there had come at any rate hints and suggestions which would have enabled them, had they cared to pursue hints and suggestions to the goal, to become the architects of the new building soon to be reared.

But in the end the opportunity was lost.   Although such men as Erasmus and Colet were looking along the right lines, they were not strong enough, were too much lacking in robustness, to make a real religious Reformation. For the stringent surgery which the religious situation demanded they had no aptitude or liking at all.   Perhaps it might justly be said that in the case of Erasmus too much influence was permitted to a sort of literary hypersensitiveness which, while it impelled the man a certain distance towards reform, acted with equal insistence in holding him back from the further stretches of the road.   The literary temper, leading him to the critical method and to a close examination of the Scripture text very different from the arbitrary treatment of it favoured by the Church, forced him to the assertion of certain ideas which were at variance with Catholic orthodoxy ; but that same literary temper made him, by what may be called its fragile delicacy, shrink from the very conflict he half provoked ; and it seemed as though Erasmus, having introduced the little rift within the lute, straightway made it his business to seal it up again.   More-over, this natural tendency of his nature was accentuated through the effect produced upon him by the untempered energy and violence of Luther's propaganda.   To Erasmus, Luther's roughness of manner and method was an offence, and inevitably started something like a reaction in his own mind.   If reform really meant all that Luther declared it to mean, and if reform could only be had by Luther's way, then for reform Erasmus was not prepared.   His whole attitude became hesitating, and to a great extent inconsistent : he deprecated the logical consequences of his own statements : he dropped into the rather pitiful position of a man striving to show that he does not mean so very much after all.   From

the first, although speaking kindly of Luther, and exchanging with him letters couched in friendly tone, Erasmus was careful to dissociate himself from what appeared to him Luther's extreme views.   In May 1519 he writes to Luther, calling him his " brother in Christ," but saying that there appeared to him to be more usefulness in restraint than in impetuosity, and that it helps more to contend against those who abuse the Papal authority than to attack the Popes themselves.[1]   A little earlier Erasmus had written to Melanchthon to the effect that " Luther has censured some things as they deserve, but would that he had done so as happily as he has freely ! "[2]   Later on, his language becomes much more pronounced.   In 1525 he says, " I greatly fear for this miserable Luther " ; and then followed an actual battle of the books between the two, Erasmus writing the *De libero arbitrio* against Luther, Luther replying in *De servo arbitrio*, and Erasmus rejoining in the *Hyperaspistes* once again.   One need not defend the violence into which Luther frequently allowed himself to fall ; but that he, and not Erasmus, was right in diagnosing the prevalent religious disease and in prescribing the remedy, is past questioning. Erasmus, however, was first and foremost the man of culture rather than the man of religious passion.   Religious he undoubtedly was.   He pours scorn upon a preacher who, intoxicated with the conceit of classical learning, sent classical names and allusions rioting through every phrase, and who, amid all his exuberance of Roman learning and illustration, found no room for any mention of the death of Christ.[3]   But nevertheless it was the literary instinct, a literary sensitiveness, which was dominant in him throughout.   And from that point of view, all that Erasmus was prepared for was a very mild setting in order of the ecclesiastical house.   That the principle of the Papacy was in itself a harmful one—that directly or indirectly the corruption and powerlessness of religion could be traced, not merely to the abuses of the Papal system, but to the Papal system itself in its essential being—was an idea Erasmus never entertained.   To Pope

[1] *Ep.* 427 (Leyden edition of *Works*, iii. 445).
[2] *Ep.* 411 (*ibid.* iii. 432).
[3] *Dialogus Ciceronianus* (*ibid.* i. 974).

Leo the Tenth he writes, " Would that I were allowed to
fall down before you and kiss those truly blessed feet ! "[1]
He declares that when he has been urged to ally himself
with Luther, he has in his turn urged reconciliation with the
Pope.[2]   These are typical utterances, dropping repeatedly
in one form or another from Erasmus' pen.   Nowhere does
he, when brought to the point, show any appreciation of the
necessity for a thorough re-building of the religious edifice
upward from its base.   Whether he did not see it, or
whether he preferred to shut his eyes, we are not compelled
to decide.   Probably neither alternative quite holds good.
Erasmus appears all through like a man who, conscientiously
accepting one set of ideas, and feeling instinctively that
another set apparently involved therein is false, seeks un-
successfully for a line of argument which will justify both his
assent to the first and his rejection of the second.   But
evidently the man who could say such things as those
quoted just now, and at the same time put forward such
ideas as those quoted before, must be held convicted of
inconsistency, whatever the origin of the inconsistency may
have been.   It is not suggested here, as is suggested some-
times, that Erasmus was inconsistent in his attitude to the
distinctly Protestant movement, or that he changed his
attitude as time went on ; for from the beginning, as we
have seen, he refused to say " Amen " when Luther called.
But he was inconsistent with himself.   He somehow contrived
to believe two contradictory things—to work from two
contradictory principles—at one and the same time.   And,
as has been previously remarked, the explanation may lie
in the fact that the literary and humanistic impulse which
impelled him to his study of the Scripture exhausted itself
with the achievement of purely literary results, and that
nothing else of sufficiently overmastering driving power came
in to take its place.   Religious passion divorced from
literary passion might prove itself (in Lutheranism did prove
itself) capable of accomplishing the reforming work : literary
passion divorced from religious passion shrank away when
the critical point was reached.

[1] *Ep.* 174 (Leyden edition of *Works*, iii. 150).
[2] *Ep.* 501 (*ibid.* iii. 545).

So the promise which the Revival of Learning, when it applied itself to religion, seemed for a moment to hold out, went unfulfilled. And as we found matter for poignant regret in the divorce between religion and philosophy signalised by the failure of Wicliffism, so in the divorce between religion and literature, or "humanism," signalised by the arrested energies of Erasmus' school, is matter for an equal regret. How much, from the strictly religious point of view—even from the point of view of the Nonconformist spirit and ideal—was lost through the failure of humanism to fulfil the work it began, has already been indicated. And, besides that, there is another loss to be set down. Religion has suffered incalculably—both in its own temper and in its power to capture the world—from the fact that religion and literature have determined, as if by mutual consent, to take each a separate path, and have agreed that whatever casual contacts there may be, of real community of interest there exists little or none. One wishes that the Renaissance men had risen to the occasion, and had better interpreted both the needs of the hour and their own chance. But we have to take things as they are ; and it was not by the "humanistic" movement that the religious future of England was destined to be made.

SECTION 3

The Religious Movement

AUTHORITIES.—See the references to the specifically religious side given for the next section ; and on the general condition of the Church add Gasquet's *Eve of the Reformation*. Tyndale's works have been published by the Parker Society.

Still more curious, however, is the fact that it was not by the religious movement which in the time of Henry the Eighth was going on in England, that the future of English religion was moulded or controlled. It is precisely such a moulding and control that we should, antecedently, have expected. For on the Continent the Protestant voice was sounding loudly, and the Protestant tide was rising high : in European countries the movement for religious reform

was compelling attention as a thing which had a very distinct essential being of its own, and which must be dealt with on its own merits—was aggressive and outstanding and conscious of its own individuality. There men and nations were being compelled to look Protestantism in the face, and to say " aye " or " no." Something of the same sort we should naturally have looked for in England ; for though communication with the Continent was not then the facile thing it is now, yet the distance was not so great as to be impassable for the flash of thought ; and we have already seen how the Revival of Learning came over to us across the sea. Surely there would be in England, as there was abroad, a spirit which would force the religious question, disentangled from all others, upon the attention of men, and would compel the formulation of a distinct answer, reached on religious grounds alone ! Surely in England, as abroad, the issue between the reformed religion and the older faith would demand to be fully and fairly met, with no cross interests interfering in the court where the case was tried ! The contagion of Protestantism, one would expect, would make itself felt in England with a strength by which that much at least would be ensured.

Yet it did not happen so. That there was a distinct religious movement in England at this time is not to be doubted. Prosecutions for heresy were numerous. From orthodox Catholic writers testimony can be gathered to the existence of no inconsiderable religious unrest among the crowd. The words of Roger Edgworth, uttered concerning this period in his later years, may be taken as a sample. " Whilst I was yet a young student in divinity," he says, " Luther's heresies rose and were scattered here in this realm, which, in less space than a man would think, had so sore infected the Christian fold, first the youth and then the elders, when the children would set their fathers to school, that the King's Majesty nor all the clerks in the realm had much ado to extinguish them." [1]   There was a considerable circulation of heretical books, Wiclif's tracts and Luther's, by a society called the "Christian Brethren," whose members

[1] Edgworth's *Sermons*, Preface. Quoted in Gasquet's *The Eve of the Reformation*, p. 188.

were found even in Oxford and Cambridge University halls.[1]
At Oxford they formed a really influential Protestant party
which Wolsey arraigned before him in 1527.[2]   And in
this same year, Strype tells us,[3] Protestant meetings were
discovered in Colchester and elsewhere.   We saw, in a
previous chapter, how the doctrines of Lollardy had, in more
or less defined form, been kept alive from the days of Wiclif
to the period with which we are now concerned ; and the
fresh winds that now were blowing from Europe naturally
fanned the embers over here into strong flame.   To put it
at its lowest, the minds of men were turning to religious
subjects with quickened interest, were conscious that religious
questions had become matter for new searching, and pro-
bably felt towards the Church something of that lessening of
respect, not to say that slight contempt, which is always felt
by the masses of men towards an institution thrown upon
the defensive after long years or centuries of power.

But, nevertheless, the religious movement was not of the
kind that could dominate the situation or make the future :
one cannot think of it as sufficiently articulate, or defined, or
passionate for that ; nor does the evidence point to anything
like a sharp division of the country into Catholics and
Protestants, each facing the other in the attitude of war.   It
was scarcely a religious crisis, or, at any rate, was scarcely
realised as such.   A considerable discount has to be subtracted
from the apparent significance of many of the events which
loom largest upon the pages of contemporary history.   Even
the number of trials for heresy hardly means what one might
at first suppose ; for when the inquisitors set about their
work, they called before their bar not only those who at
the bidding of definite conviction had dared to deny the
orthodox faith, but those who through mere carelessness or
wantonness had failed in the due observance of common
religious rites.   In the first persecution under Henry's Six
Articles—when, though he had cast off the jurisdiction of
Rome, Henry had not yet moved in any essential respects
towards the reformed faith—five hundred persons in London

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[1] See, for the " Christian Brethren," Froude's *History of England* (ed. 1870),
ii. 26 ff.   [2] *Ibid.* ii. 45-70.
[3] *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), I. i. 114 ff.

were charged with heresy in five days.[1] The number startles.
But among these " heretics " were those guilty of nothing
worse than going seldom to mass ; those who did not hold
up their hands or smite their breasts at the elevation of the
Host ; those who talked in church.   " In the end, however,
of this first persecution under the Bloody Bill, the zeal of the
citizens was frustrated : for the King, not being prepared to
illuminate his capital with so many flames, was compelled to
pardon all the convicted prisoners in a body, and to set them
at liberty." [2]   At a later date much the same thing occurred.
Events like this do not, of course, indicate any Protestant
zeal, or any religious fervour whatever, in a great many
of those called upon to answer for their delinquencies.
Protestants of noblest spirit and reasoned conviction there
were, some of whom, like Anne Askew, were faithful unto
death.   Their numbers are by no means inconsiderable, and
their faith is in its quality like finest gold.   But we must
not reckon all who were brought before the civil or ecclesi-
astical tribunals for seemingly religious reasons as having
been either possessed of reforming knowledge or inspired by
reforming zeal.   It is probable, moreover, that the genuine
Protestant movement which did exist drew into its ranks—
or drew to hang upon its skirts, perhaps one might say—
not a few who, caring nothing at all for Protestantism or for
religion, were driven simply by love of excitement, by desire
to aim a blow at the constituted order, or even by mere
frivolity.   What has already been said as to some of those
arrested for "heresy" points that way.   The non-principled
attachment of such men as this is a disadvantage which all
reforming movements must face ; and there is no reason to
suppose that the Protestant movement of Henry the Eighth's
time was exempt.   In fact, even in some of the tracts issued
by the " Christian Brethren " we come upon a violence, not
to say scurrility, of language, which indicates that a passion
far removed from any religious quality must have impelled
the authors' pens.[3] We have to guard ourselves against
drawing too large inferences from facts which do not, on

[1] By the citizens, who formed themselves into a court, meeting in the Mercers'
Chapel (Froude, *History of England*, ed. 1870, iii. 406-408).
[2] R. W. Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, ii. 136.
[3] See some of the chapters in S. R. Maitland's *Essays on the Reformation*.

closer examination, support the deductions at first apparently suggested. Neither the roll of those arraigned for heresy, nor the indisputable fact that there was a widespread revival of interest in earlier Lollard writings and an equally wide-spread reading of the later German reforming tracts, points to a purely Protestant movement so strong that it ought to have swayed the religious and ecclesiastical changes which were taking place. What these things do point to, when seen in their real dimensions, is the existence of a Protestant movement, indeed, but of one which, relatively to the national life as a whole, was no such great affair after all. And there are other considerations which tend to confirm this view. When, for instance, one enquires into the feeling entertained by the people in general towards the clergy, one finds that the people's sense of hostility was much less strongly marked than is sometimes supposed. Sir Thomas More—who, though a stringent Catholic, may be taken as an impartial and judici-ally minded witness—held a controversy with Christopher Saint-German [1] on the point ; and, while admitting that in some cases the latter's description of the strained relations between clergy and laity was justifiable, he declared that, taken as a generalisation, it went much too far. What the impartial student gathers, as to the facts, is in net result this —that dissatisfaction existed and was in many places growing, but that to assume anything like a universal antagonism on the part of the laity towards their spiritual counsellors is to reach a verdict which the evidence will not support. Probably, while the higher ecclesiastical orders were hated for their ostentation and their greed, the working priests, those with whom the masses of the people were in closest contact, excited in many cases a quite opposite emotion, and at least woke no actual dislike. The people, as Mr. Brewer puts it, "for the most part . . . paid Peter pence, and heard mass, and did as their fathers had done before them." [2] " Nor," as the same writer says, " considering the temper of the English people, is it probable that immorality could have existed among the ancient clergy to the degree which the exaggera-

[1] Saint-German's book, which was published anonymously in 1532, was called *A Treatise concerning the Division between the Spiritualty and the Temporalty.*
[2] *The Reign of Henry VIII.,* i. 52.

tion of poets, preachers, and satirists might lead us to suppose. The existence of such corruption is not established by authentic documents, or by an impartial and broad estimate of the character and conduct of the nation before the Reformation." [1]   We need not suppose that the average Englishman of the time was moved, in most cases, by moral disgust towards the priests, or that he ought to have been. It is quite true that with the awakening of men's minds under the new spirit of the time, ecclesiastical and priestly pretensions would be more closely and suspiciously scrutinised, and a good deal of the blind reverence and unquestioning faith with which the layman had previously confronted the clerk would pass away ; but this is a very different matter from a declaration of war, or from the adoption of a definitely Protestant attitude towards sacerdotal claims.   With a few, but only with a very few, was the matter carried so far. Once again, the inference, looking at the matter from this point of view, seems to be that, while a Protestant movement undoubtedly existed, it hardly looked like becoming the dominant and ruling factor in any new ecclesiastical settlement that might be made.   For that, its hour had not come.

In short, as we look with unbiassed minds on the picture of the national life in Henry's time, we see that the issue between Protestantism and Catholicism, on the purely religious side, was not a burning one at all for the mass of men, and that Protestantism was not strong enough to make it so.   Zealous Protestants and zealous Catholics alike there certainly were.   There was a real Protestant movement, as there was a real Catholicism beneath that nominal submission to the Church with which many were content.   But the nation as a whole was not deeply stirred by these things.   So far as these things involved the national life on its political side, men were ready to give them earnest care ; and it was, as we shall presently see, as a question of politics that the religious question ultimately came to the front.   But for the rest, men let the strife go by.   Its echoes sounded comparatively faintly in their ears.   Protestantism, real though it was in the minds and hearts of a good many, had not a sufficiently commanding power to

[1] *The Reign of Henry VIII.*, ii. 470.

force the issue upon those who were indifferent or dull.   It
lived, but made no threat (as some would have said)—gave
no promise (as others would have put it)—of taking the
reins into its hands, or even of challenging the right of the
hands by which the reins were held.

Perhaps the most significant fact in this connection is
that the reign of Henry the Eighth affords no instance of a
really outstanding Protestant name—no instance of a name
whose bearer had both will and power to force himself into
the place of leader in a religious revolt.   In England there
was no one to do for the country, even in relatively small
degree, what Luther did for Germany.   We look vainly for
any men, or indeed for any one man, in whom the Protestant
genius was incarnated, and who, besides being himself
inspired by the Protestant passion, could on any great and
epoch-making scale kindle it in other hearts.   The man of
loftiest ecclesiastical position in this period who stands out
in history as identified with the Protestant cause, Cranmer,
was not in any wise a man of this stamp ; and in point of
fact, Cranmer moved only slowly, and under compulsion of
circumstances, towards the Protestant position, always being
one who followed rather than one who led.   He was not of
the stuff which goes to the making of those who lift a
standard on high and magnetise crowds into an enthusiastic
rallying round their flag.   William Tyndale—who in 1524
visited Luther at Wittenberg, and subsequently set up a
printing-press first at Cologne and then at Worms—un-
doubtedly exercised a great influence through his translation
of the Scriptures and through his other works.[1]   But this
kind of influence is no adequate substitute for that which
issues from a personal leadership ; and not in this way could
Protestantism be made a really aggressive force.   The name
of Latimer—the man who could preach with equal accept-

[1] He circulated reprints of Wiclif's tracts.   His principal original work was
The Obedience of a Christian Man, of which a popular edition has been edited
by Rev. Richard Lovett.   Undoubtedly Tyndale was moved by a very violent
hatred of all ecclesiastical authorities.   In the book just mentioned he maintains
that a king's rule is absolute and a king is accountable only to God, and to a
king men must render implicit obedience.   But he inveighs bitterly against any
authority exercised by the clergy, and complains that emperors and kings have
become mere "hangmen to the bishops."   Strype records how pleased Henry
VIII. was with the book (*Ecclesiastical Memorials*, ed. 1822, I. i. 172).

ance to the crowds at St. Paul's Cross and to the courtly
circle itself, the man whose courage enabled him to lash the
" unpreaching prelates " with his invective and to bid them,
if they would not learn of God, for very shame learn of the
Devil (who, he said, was the busiest bishop of all),[1] the man
who could unflinchingly exhort the proud Henry to have
pity on his own soul—the name of Latimer is one to be held
in highest honour.   But Latimer, though driven almost
unconsciously by his moral and spiritual passion into
Protestant ideas, had not, so far as one can judge, deliberately
reasoned the matter out to a definitely Protestant conclusion,
and consequently lacked one of the essentials for a leader in
a Protestant crusade.   Protestantism had no great protagonist
who could make its doctrines the burning and supreme
question of the time.   One may well be surprised at this
when one remembers how, as has been stated, the " Christian
Brethren " were found at the Universities, and how in some
of the Colleges the most studious and scholarly entered their
ranks.   " The group of ' Brethren,' " says Mr. J. R. Green,
" which was formed in Cardinal College for the secret reading
and discussion of the Epistles soon included the more
intelligent and learned scholars of the University." [2]   We
should have expected that from an association of such men
as these some one would have emerged with a full equipment
of both mind and character for the playing of a leader's
part.   In all probability, however, the interest felt in religious
problems even by many of the " Christian Brethren " at
Oxford and Cambridge was not much more than the interest
which " humanism " inspired ; and with the reasons which
prevented humanism from becoming a true religious force
we have already dealt.[3]   At any rate, the fact is clear.
Not from among the " Christian Brethren," nor from else-
where, did any English Luther come forth.   And thus we
are once more brought to see that in relation to the entire
national life of the time, seen against the background of the
whole contemporary panorama of incident, the distinctly
and religiously Protestant movement in this period was a

[1] The particular sermon in which this remark occurs was not preached,
however, till 1548, after the accession of Edward VI.
[2] *History of the English People*, ii. 129.
[3] See previous section.

comparatively small affair. It matters little whether we say that given a leader, Protestantism would have been a much more forceful thing among the people at large, or that given a more forceful Protestantism among the people at large, a leader would have been found to be the centre of its activities and to consolidate its powers. Without labouring to decide which is cause and which is effect, or to set the boundaries of each, we can at any rate discern the two-fold fact. There was no dominant personality to be the visible embodiment of the Protestant cause ; there was nowhere flowing a tide of Protestant thought and feeling so full and strong as decisively to affect the ocean of national life into which it flowed.

In the end, then, it was not under a distinctly and religiously Protestant impulse that the ecclesiastical and apparently religious changes of Henry's reign were wrought out. A genuine Protestantism existed ; but it was not strong enough to insist on its right to manage what ought to have been its own particular concerns, or to prevent the intrusion of alien powers into its own specific sphere. Most assuredly this is matter for regret, even though it be admitted that, had things been otherwise, England's religious history would still have had to tell of storm and stress. It is true that not even Protestantism, had it moulded the religious changes of the time, would or could have moulded them in such fashion as to render a later Nonconformist movement superfluous : had there been in England anything correspond- ing to the Lutheranism of Germany, the process of reform, as the Nonconformist spirit must conceive it, would not have been carried through to its final goal. Indeed, strange as it may seem, the Revival of Learning, on its religious side, probably contained within itself greater promise in this regard than even a full-powered Protestant movement would have held ; for it started from primary critical processes applied to the sacred literatures, and on this line, had the pioneers pushed along it with a courage that endured to the end, the Nonconformist principle, exalting life over organisa- tion as the supreme thing, must have been reached. Pro- testantism, on the other hand, was concerned rather with the correction of abuses than with an entirely fresh exploration

or with a getting down to the bed-rock of things in order to
make an entire reconstruction of the religious edifice through-
out.   Its positiveness was but the other side, compulsorily
brought into view, of the negative with which it began : its
method was, so to say, to strip off the worn or ill-fitting
garments of religion, substituting new ones for old as the
old were discarded one by one.   Certainly in its carrying of
the negative process through stage after stage (and each
stage completed rendered a further stage inevitable) it was
driven to affirmations, to positives, which had to be found to
fill the gaps the negative process had left.   But even in its
utmost affirmations it was far from leaving the existing
system, leaping up to the ultimate starting-point, and then
working out the whole thing from there.   It started from
the existing system, the existing organisation, even if it were
only to contradict or accuse it or deny its worth.   The
doctrine of justification by faith, unspeakably important as it
was, was still concerned with finding the true means, in
contrast with the means provided by the existing order,
whereby a right relation might be established between man
and God.   It was with the finding of *means* that it was
concerned, and, therefore, it belonged still in a manner to the
external realm : it did not lead thought, and consequently
could not lead experience, down to an ultimate relation
between man and God constituted only out of life, its
communication by God and its reception by man ; and,
not leading thought and experience thither, it could not
work out all the consequences which thought and experience,
once led thither and then starting out thence upon a
constructive work, would have seen to be involved.   This,
we saw, was in effect what Wiclif did ; but Protestantism
did not reach Wiclif's level in this regard.   Protestantism,
even in its most essential doctrine, did not get far enough
away from the realm of means and system, far enough in
the direction of mysticism, if one cares to put it so, to satisfy
the demands of the Nonconformist spirit.   All this is not
to depreciate Protestantism : it is but to state facts which
consideration finds obvious enough if it addresses itself to
the matter, however seldom they may be appreciated ; and
it is, of course, to say that even if Protestantism had

dominated the situation at the time with which we are
dealing, and had created the new order in accordance with
its own demands, the later Nonconformist appeal would still
have had to be made. Nevertheless it is, as has been said,
matter for regret that the religious changes of Henry's reign
were not made under the rule of a distinctly religious and
Protestant idea. Had they so been made, the national
dealing with religion would not have been the non-religious
thing it was : religious interest and religious passion, causing
all the new arrangements in the religious and ecclesiastical
sphere to be its own manifestations and applications, would
have prepared the way for whatever further developments
the religious spirit, as it gained fuller vision and completer
understanding, might demand ; and the subsequent Non-
conformist movement, instead of being looked upon as a
contradiction of or an enemy to what had already been
done, would have been recognised as being only the legitimate
continuation of what had gone before. The truth of this
will be more clearly seen at the end of the next section,
when we appreciate what the religious changes of Henry the
Eighth were and out of what motives they actually came,
and still more clearly when we deal with actual Non-
conformist history itself. For the moment, we have but to
note the fact that the feebleness of genuine Protestantism in
Henry's reign, its inability to stamp itself upon the religious
or quasi-religious modifications which Henry introduced,
greatly affected the future religious history of England, and,
so far as the Nonconformist principle and its realisation are
concerned, threw many a hindrance in their way.

SECTION 4

The Politico-Religious Movement

AUTHORITIES.—For the general history of the reign, the *Chronicles* of
Wriothesley and of Hall, and the *History* by Lord Herbert of Cherbury. The
modern histories of Lingard and Froude. The volume *England under the Tudors*,
by Arthur D. Innes, in the *History of England* edited by Oman, is very useful.
Specially thorough is Brewer's *Reign of Henry VIII*. For the specifically
religious side, Strype's *Ecclesiastical Memorials* and *Life of Cranmer*, Foxe's *Acts
and Monuments* (which, however, needs constant correction in the light of later
criticism), Collier's *Ecclesiastical History* and Burnet's *History of the Reformation*.

Among later works may be mentioned R. W. Dixon's *History of the Church of England*, vols i. and ii., which deal very fully and on the whole impartially with Henry's religious policy, and J. Gairdner's *English Church in the Sixteenth Century*. The last-named book, besides being otherwise valuable, gives a careful account of the persecutions of both Catholics and Protestants, and is extremely judicial in its presentation of the facts. The period of Henry the Eighth is also covered, from a somewhat different point of view, by the same writer's *Lollardy and the Reformation*, volumes i. and ii.

Not the Revival of Learning, then, and not such Protestantism as existed, was the determining force in the religious changes of Henry the Eighth's reign. So much we have seen. Where is the determining force to be found ?

The answer is that the determining force is to be looked for in Henry's desire for self-aggrandisement and in his resolve to let nothing come between him and the gratification of his pleasure or his self-will. The " reform "—if by a stretch of language it may at all legitimately be so termed—the " reform " of his reign had comparatively little of a religious element in it : it was merely out of Henry's obstinate persistence in pursuing an object on which he had set his whole heart that it started ; and one is safe in saying that only because the particular object whereon he was bent happened to be one which brought him into conflict with the Pope did religion come into the question at all. Had not this object emerged upon the field of Henry's desire, some other would have done so ; and something else than religion might then have had to submit to change. Whatever change might, under any circumstances, be necessary in order that he might get his own way was a change on which Henry would have thrown himself with hungry passion : the fact that the actual change, or " reform," which did take place had to be worked in the religious sphere was but an accident of the situation, and no more. From one point of view, indeed, the entire movement might almost be called a personal one, inasmuch as it arose from, and tended to, the satisfaction of the King's desires, was in truth a movement affecting the King's personal position first and foremost and other things only incidentally, went to make the King's authority supreme. Inasmuch, however, as any increase in a sovereign's power means an alteration in the sovereign's relation to the people, and is therefore a political event—and inasmuch as it was the religious situation on which Henry's self-seeking induced

him to lay his hand—the movement may without excessive
licence be termed " politico-religious," as in the title-line of
this section it has been called. It is at any rate a sufficiently
generously-conceived designation for a movement which,
though using great things for pawns in its game, had in
itself no greatness at all.

Henry's character (and it is necessary to remember this
in order rightly to understand his religious policy) was at
the same time daring where Henry's own wishes were con-
cerned, and yet lacking in daring's last touch. Bent on self-
aggrandisement, determined that when he had spoken
nothing more should be said and that his ambition must
bring the world to his feet, Henry undoubtedly was. Yet a
certain strain of weakness ran through this nature which was
in many ways so strong ; and Henry, impatient of resistance
as he was, scarcely despised it or thought it of no account.
His impatience with it, in fact, always seems to have in it a
trace of disappointment : he appears surprised that the
whole world does not show itself adjusted to his particular
preferences and desires, and constructed in such wise as to
help them on : there is something almost naïve about the
way in which—for instance, in the matter of the divorce—
Henry looks about him for something which will prove that
the universe is after all on his side. His courage, genuine
as it is, appears to leap up and then drop to ground
again, to reconnoitre and make attacks not pushed fully
home, rather than maintain a consistent and sweeping flight
that spurns the earth at every beat of its wings. It came,
one might say, in spurts—in spurts very often long sustained,
but spurts nevertheless. He shrank from nothing when the
mood was on him : the fact that in 1519, on the death of
the Emperor Maximilian, he entertained the utterly hopeless
project of getting himself elected in the Emperor's place,
and made Wolsey, against that prelate's better judgment,
support the plan, shows that even what other men would
have called the obvious absurdity of any ambition did not
warn him off.[1] The incident, indeed, is typical of Henry's

[1] Of course the project came to nothing. The elected Emperor was Charles
V. Frederic, Elector of Saxony, was first chosen, but he declined the honour.
It is of some interest to note that at an earlier date Maximilian had offered, on
conditions, to resign the Imperial crown to Henry, adopting the latter as his son,

character—of the character of a man who was incessantly looking round the world for an opportunity of pushing himself a step higher, and who thought that the swinging open of any door was an invitation to him to come in.   Yet it is significant that through a great part of his career Henry depended so intimately upon two men, upon Wolsey first and upon Thomas Cromwell afterwards, and that in more than one case he submitted to or adopted an initiative that was not his own but theirs.   The strictly political history of Henry's reign does not come within our view ; but one cannot study it without seeing that in the matter of foreign relations, for example, Wolsey kept Henry on the whole in much closer contact with France than Henry himself cared for, and away from that closer contact with the Empire which Henry himself would have preferred.   And the plan of arrogating to himself the supreme Headship of the Church, by which the difficulty of the divorce was at last solved, was Cromwell's, and not the King's.   Ready enough as the King was to adopt it when it was suggested, not even Henry's courage, so far as we can see, would have given birth to the idea.   Henry was not a man to stand absolutely alone, or to find an all-sufficient resource within himself ; and, being what he was, Henry was fortunate in being served by two strong men who, like Wolsey and Cromwell, were willing to devote their strength to the sole purpose of further gratifying his ambitions and glorifying his sovereign state. Allied with this dependence upon his servants, and to some extent the cause of it, was a certain care for appearances on Henry's part, a feeling that he must stand justified before the world—which is but to say in other words what was said before, that Henry looked round for something to prove that after all the universe was on his side.   That last height of reckless daring which heeds not consistency, which gives no reasons, and which simply avows that it is going to be a law unto itself, Henry had not climbed.   Arbitrary though he was, he must hide his arbitrariness from the eyes of other people, and if possible from his own.   Reasons for this

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but Henry, doubting Maximilian's sincerity, had refused to entertain the idea. See Lingard's *History of England* (ed. 1855), iv. 190, and Brewer, *Henry VIII.*, i. 134 ff.

action and for that, reasons in whose light each action
should appear, not only permissible, but the one supremely
virtuous action, must be found ; and Cromwell, Cranmer, or
whosoever it might be, must find them.   In Henry's religious
policy, as we shall see, this desire for self-justification is
clearly revealed ; and its existence in Henry's disposition
must be taken as the open sesame to more than one door.
If no other justification were available for an action already
committed, then some other action must be committed
which was in a manner the consequence of, and was
apparently called for by, the first, so that the justification of
consistency might at least be claimed, and an appearance of
steadfast and constraining principle obtained.   These things,
and all that they imply in respect of Henry's character, need
to be borne in mind in any review of the politico-religious
movement which Henry carried through.   Henry was
daring, and yet the last touch of daring was not his.   He
must have his way, and the whole world must be made to
help him.   But nevertheless, both he and the world must
somehow be persuaded that his service of himself, and his
pressing of the world into that service, were merely incidental
to a nobler work, and were in reality the manifestation of an
unadulterated and brightly-burning zeal.

At the beginning of his reign Henry's orthodoxy was
unquestioned ; and it was not by any severance from or
opposition to the Pope, but by identifying himself heart and
soul with the Pope's cause, that Henry hoped and wished
to win a halo for his own head.   In 1521 Henry wrote,
or at any rate claimed the credit for, a book entitled *An
Assertion of the Seven Sacraments*, which constituted a
reply to Luther.   How much Henry himself had to do
with its production is matter of conjecture : the general
opinion—which, however, probably exaggerated the facts—
was that Wolsey was chiefly responsible for the book's
contents ;[1] while Sir Thomas More in one place[2] speaks
of " the makers of the same," and calls himself " a sorter
out and placer of the principal matters therein con-
tained."   But whoever the actual writer may have been,

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[1] Lingard, *History of England* (ed. 1855), iv. 228.
[2] Roper's *Life of More* (ed. 1822), p. 65.   Roper adds in a footnote that the
" makers " were Bishop Fisher and Lee, afterwards Archbishop of York.

the book served Henry's purpose, as it was intended to do. How far his authorship of it, or his claim to its authorship, was prompted by personal ambition, and how far by zeal for truth, may be gathered from the fact that Clark, who was charged with presenting a copy of the *Assertion* to Pope Leo the Tenth,[1] was charged also with two demands—one a demand that Henry should receive the title of " Defender of the Faith," [2] and the other a demand that the King's book should be presented in full Consistory and be crowned with the Pope's approbation there. The first demand was granted, the second refused.[3] The entire incident shows how far Henry was, at the outset of his reign, from any idea of revolt against Rome, and how absolutely out of sympathy he was with any attempt at a reform of the established faith. He had not even cast a glance, except a glance of detestation and disgust, in that direction : he was, and if he had not found the fountain of satisfaction which looked so promising dried up when on a subsequent occasion he brought his cup thither to be filled, would have remained, the Pope's obedient henchman and devotee.

For when Henry, moved by the strength of his passion for Anne Boleyn, began to profess conscientious doubts as to the legality of his marriage with Catherine of Aragon, and to seek for a judgment from Rome which should set him free, he found himself holding out his cup in vain. We need not linger over the various and repeated attempts made by Henry to force the Pope's hand : the story, sordid to the last degree, can easily be traced through by any student in the more detailed and general histories of the time. The salient fact is that the King was determined to have his way, to push Catherine from her place at his side on the throne and set Anne Boleyn in her stead. How

[1] Five Popes were contemporary with Henry—Julius II. (d. 1513), Leo X. (d. 1521), Adrian VI. (d. 1523), Clement VII. (d. 1534), and Paul III.

[2] Julius II. had transferred the title of " Most Christian King " from the King of France to Henry. But Leo, Julius' successor, declared himself ignorant of the matter. The grant of the title " Defender of the Faith " was in part a compensation for the loss of the other.

[3] An amusing account of Leo's manœuvres in the matter is given in Brewer's *Henry VIII.*, i. 602-605.

far he persuaded himself that his connection with Catherine was really illegitimate, we need not decide, nor how far he supposed himself to entertain an honourable affection towards Anne. Looking to his subsequent conduct towards Anne herself (she was cast off and beheaded after a year of marriage) and to the whole tenor of the King's life (he had already seduced Anne's sister), observers will have little hesitation in concluding that, whatever Henry's self-delusions may have been, it was by mere animal passion that he was really moved. Once started, he was not to be held back ; and, though one device after another failed, the bold counsel of Thomas Cromwell at length suggested the cutting of the knot which could not be untied. Rome might delay in pronouncing a decision one way or another (the cause, after a Legatine Commission had commenced its sittings in England, had its venue changed to Rome and then hung fire)—in the end, Henry took the matter out of Rome's hands. In 1531, on Cromwell's advice (Wolsey had fallen from the King's favour through his failure to obtain Rome's consent to a divorce, and Cromwell had stepped into his place), Henry formally disavowed the jurisdiction of the Pope in judicial affairs, and declared himself supreme Head of the Church in the land.[1] Even now, it is probable, Henry did not intend the breach to be so wide as it ultimately turned out to be. In some way, he probably calculated, the Roman Pontiff would even yet decide the question of the divorce in the sense he desired ; and the assumption of the title of the Church's Supreme Head was in all likelihood designed for something in the nature of a threat. At any rate, when in 1532 Archbishop Warham died and Henry wished to put Cranmer into the vacant Canterbury see, the fact that the appointment was vested with the Pope was still recognised, and the Pope's consent to it was actually obtained.[2] Cranmer, it should be said, had commended himself to the King's favourable notice by a suggestion which he had thrown out in the earlier stages of Henry's struggle for a divorce—a suggestion that if a sufficient number of opinions against the marriage with

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[1] Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), I. i. 285.
[2] Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), iv. 206, 207.

Catherine could be wrested from the Universities of England
and the Continent, there would be justification for treating
its invalidity as proved.[1]   The suggestion was actually put
into practice and a considerable number of verdicts in the
sense desired by the King were obtained.   Some of them,
however (certainly those of Oxford and Cambridge), were
delivered under pressure,[2] and in any case they had no effect
on the Pope's mind.   But Cranmer—he had at the time been
but a private tutor and almost wholly unknown—now had his
reward.   His elevation to the archiepiscopal see enabled Henry
to serve him with some sort of gratitude, and at the same time
ensured to Henry yet more of Cranmer's help.   And now,
whether or no Henry had intended to go so far, the com-
pleteness of the breach with Rome became apparent.   The
logic of events had to be faced ; and if Cranmer's appoint-
ment was to yield its full use to the King, Henry must go
still further along the road into which he had turned.
Cranmer, who was abroad when he was appointed to
Canterbury, returned early in 1533 : in May he delivered
judgment in the Archbishop's Court, held for the occasion
at Dunstable,[3] to the effect that the King's marriage with
Catherine could not stand ; and Anne, with whom Henry
had already in January contracted a secret marriage,[4] was
crowned as Queen.   Sentence of excommunication by the
Pope followed practically as a matter of course ; but Henry
made what, if he were not to stultify himself, was in truth
the one unavoidable reply.   Although he gave notice of an
appeal against the excommunication to the next General
Council, a still more significant thing was a decree which in
December the King's Council passed.   The decree deprived
the Pope of any title in England beyond that of " Bishop of
Rome," enacted that he should have no more authority than
any other foreign bishop, and that neither in faith nor

[1] Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), i. 267 ff.   See, however, Collier,
as previous note, iv. 147.

[2] See Pollard's *Henry VIII.*, p. 283.

[3] Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), iv. 211, 212.

[4] The precise date is not certainly known, nor the celebrant's name.
Cranmer denied that he had himself officiated.   A probable date (as an inference
from a phrase in a letter of Cranmer's) is January 25, and a manuscript history
gives Lee, one of the royal chaplains, as the clergyman (Lingard's *History of
England*, ed. 1855, v. 2 and note).

morals was his verdict to be taken as decisive of any point
that might arise.[1]

This was England's breach with Rome. It was in no
way religiously motived; it sprang simply and solely from
the obstinacy of the King. And Henry's conduct through
all the subsequent handling of religious and ecclesiastical
matters was based on one idea—the idea that he must both
maintain and justify the position he had taken up, and
must, moreover, stand clearly vindicated before the world.
It was indispensable, from this point of view, that he should
go a certain distance along the path of change in doctrine,
should do some definitely and positively constructive work,
so that his revolt from Rome might appear to have its
cause in the impelling power of principle; and yet it was
indispensable also that he should not identify himself with
the extreme views of the Protestants at home or abroad,
since he was above all things anxious to prove himself still
essentially orthodox in creed. Any inconsistency in Henry's
actions is far more apparent than real. That he persecuted
Catholics and Protestants alike proves, not his inconsistency,
but how utterly consistent he was. The Catholics who
would not acknowledge his newly-assumed Headship of the
Church were guilty of treason in his eyes: the Protestants
were heretics who deserved their doom. Against both
Henry proceeded with all the vigour needed to make his
self-vindicating flawless and complete.

Cromwell, who was appointed as the King's vicegerent
in spiritual affairs, both carried out and strengthened his
master's policy with a will. On the clergy his hand fell
heavily. All alike were required to proclaim the ecclesi-
astical authority of the King, and to denounce as usurped
the authority of the Pope: the Bishops were held responsible
for seeing that the requirement was fulfilled; and the Bishops
themselves were compelled to make a formal denial of their
oath of canonical obedience to the Pope, an oath which,
under the new order of things, was of course held contrary
to the prerogative of the King. Not all the clergy were
subservient; and if Protestantism has its list of faithful men
and women who suffered under Henry the Eighth, the

[1] Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), I. i. 232.

Roman Catholic Church has also its honourable martyr-roll. Bishop Fisher was the greatest of the clerical band.[1] He had persistently opposed Henry in the matter of the divorce ; and his refusal to acknowledge the King's supremacy enabled Henry to chastise him for this unforgivable offence, the fact that the Pope had made Fisher a cardinal of course counting for nothing to Henry's wrath.   The head of a man still greater, though not an ecclesiastic, fell when in 1534 Sir Thomas More, who had resigned the office of Chancellor, was sent to the block.[2]   In these and other ways, Henry emphasised his determination to stand firm in the position he had taken, and to force recognition of its legitimacy from the Church. By successive stages the monasteries were suppressed,[3] excuse for the suppression being found in charges of evil-living on the part of the monks—charges which, if true in many instances, were probably false in at least as many.   The King's more particularly constructive work in regard to faith and creed went to the point of drawing up Articles of Religion,[4] in which transubstantiation and confession were affirmed, justification by faith being also, however, taken over from the Protestant heresy, and in which the Sacraments were counted as three instead of seven.[5]   Purgatory and masses for the dead were denounced, though prayers for the dead were allowed ; and a revised translation of the Bible, wrought by Miles Coverdale, was circulated through the land.[6]   Both in its liberalism and in its conservatism this new construction of religious faith shows clearly enough what Henry's governing purpose was. He went far enough to show a positive zeal for the purifica-tion of religion ; and yet he preserved sufficient out of the established faith to show that it was only by zeal, and by a moderate and balanced zeal, for the purification of religion, not by the spirit of reckless innovation, that he was moved. And if the Protestants thought for a moment that Henry had taken or was likely to take their side, or that he would

[1] Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), I. i. 309.
[2] Roper, *Life of More* (ed. 1822), p. 94.
[3] Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), I. i. 388-427, etc.
[4] Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), iii. 67 ff.
[5] In the *Necessary Doctrine for any Christian Man*, issued in 1542, under the King's authority, the old number of seven Sacraments was, however, restored.
[6] Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), iii. 80.

favour their cause, they were soon undeceived. With the
Protestants of the Continent, indeed, Henry coquetted
repeatedly after his repudiation of Rome. It was necessary,
in view of possible measures which the Pope might take for
Henry's chastisement, and of possible political combinations
which might under the Pope's influence be formed—it was
necessary that Henry should take precautions in self-defence;
and the cultivation of friendship with the Protestant princes
of Germany and their subjects would enable him in his turn
to make combinations which might be played off against
any combination the Pope summoned to his aid. Henry's
fourth marriage—that with Anne of Cleves, who was a
sister-in-law of Saxony's Lutheran Elector—was a politic
measure of this kind. But the Continental Protestants,
when they approached Henry on the purely religious side,
found themselves waved off. Twice the representatives of
the Protestant League came to England to arrive at some
concordat with the King and with representatives of the
English Church ; and twice they were turned baffled away.[1]
The Protestants at home suffered or were left in comparative
peace as the requirements of the King dictated. In the
earlier part of the reign, previous to Henry's break with
Rome, it was but in the natural order of things that they
should be looked on by a jealously orthodox sovereign as
foes. Later on, when Henry, though rejecting the Pope's
authority over the English Church and insisting on his own,
was nevertheless anxious to prove himself still sound in the
essentials of the faith, he was compelled, as we have seen, to
move a certain distance in the Protestant direction, and yet
to avoid moving too far. It was only to be expected that
when Henry proclaimed his Articles of Religion, which—
notwithstanding their assertion of transubstantiation, the
doctrine which above all was anathema to the Protestants—
showed that at any rate some shifting of the boundaries of
belief was going on, the Protestants should take advantage
of the fact and should make their voices heard in louder and
more confident strains. They were encouraged to do this,

[1] One writer observes that to the visits of the German Protestants " may be
traced the Lutheran, the Augustan complexion of a considerable part of the
present Articles of the Church of England " (R. N. Dixon, *History of the Church
of England*, ii. 5).

moreover, by the leanings which Cromwell was known to feel towards them—leanings which no doubt had their origin in Cromwell's conviction that the attitude of balance which Henry was striving to maintain would in the end prove an impossible one, and that the breach with Rome on the question of jurisdiction would be found to involve a wider breach than Henry supposed on the question of faith. After Henry's assumption of the title of Supreme Head of the Church, after his publication of the Articles of Religion, and after, or concurrently with, the dissolution of the monasteries, the wilder and more extreme spirits among the Protestants broke out into a veritable orgy of iconoclastic zeal.   Churches were invaded and every sort of sacrilege committed : verses from the Bible were shouted across the aisles while worship was going on : the Mass was openly derided, its celebration being interrupted by profanity of the most violent kind.[1]   But on this Henry's resolve not to travel far from the central doctrines of the old religion, nor to let himself be suspected of favouring the Lutheran heresy, came once more into play ; and in 1539 there was promulgated the Law of the Six Articles[2]—the "Bloody Bill," or still more forcibly "The Whip with Six Strings," as the Protestants called it—by which for even a first denial of transubstantiation the punishment of the fire was decreed, no retractation sufficing to save the offender, and by which the same penalty followed on a second denial of the other points the Articles contained.[3]   It must be said that large numbers of Englishmen—for even among those who rejoiced in anything that made England politically independent of Rome, the majority were still faithful to the Roman creed—were in this matter on Henry's side.   Cromwell himself fell from favour and was beheaded in 1540,[4] his offence having been in part that he had made Henry appear to have countenanced heresy in its worst excesses, or at least to

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[1] Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), iii. 374-378.

[2] *Ibid.* iii. 388-402 ; Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), I. i. 542, 543.

[3] They sanctioned the witholding of the cup at the Sacrament and monastic vows, forbade the marriage of the clergy, and prescribed private masses and auricular confession.

[4] Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), iii. 528.

have been willing to let it rid itself of its curb unreproved, but in part (and in greater part) that he had lured the King into the marriage with Anne of Cleves, from which Henry immediately on its accomplishment had turned with disgust. Under the Law of the Six Articles persecution of the Protestants raged violently and long, and if it subsided for a while, subsided only to break out again : at one time Cranmer himself stood in danger from the zeal with which some of those round the King seconded the King's ardour, so that the King himself had to throw his personal favour round the Archbishop for a shield ;[1] and in these later years of Henry's reign men of opposite faiths suffered the same doom—Catholics because their Catholicism forbade them to acknowledge the spiritual supremacy of the King, and Protestants because their Protestantism led them to deny those Romish doctrines to which the King still held firm.   On 30th July 1540 " six victims were dragged from the Tower to Smithfield, three of whom were the preachers Barnes, Jerome, and Garrett.   These were burned for heresy, while the three others, Richard Fetherstone, Dr. Edward Powell, and Thomas Abell, were hanged and subjected to the usual brutalities for treason in denying the King's supremacy. Thus three Protestant and three Catholic martyrs were put to death at the same time and place."[2]   Yet even in this period Henry refused to be pushed too far back, just as he had refused to be drawn too far forward.   He still set himself to remodel the doctrine and the forms of worship of the English Church : in 1539, the very year of the Law of the Six Articles, the " Great Bible " was issued by his authority ;[3] and in 1545 Cranmer printed by the King's order a Litany which most strikingly resembles the one still employed,[4] while a new doctrinal manual had made its appearance three years before.[5]   There is reason, indeed, for supposing that towards the end Henry, perhaps recog-

[1] Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), v. 125-131.

[2] J. Gairdner, *A History of the English Church in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 218.

[3] Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), iv. 291.

[4] *Ibid.* iv. 484.

[5] *A Necessary Doctrine for any Christian Man.*   It was expressly called " The King's Book," to distinguish it from one the Bishops had previously issued.

nising the inevitable consequences of his attitude towards Rome, perhaps recognising that he could not remain indefinitely poised, as it were, in mid-air, was prepared to take much more decided steps in the Protestant direction than one would think it possible for the promulgator of the Six Articles to take. Cranmer, it should be said, had all this time been becoming more steadily Protestant; and in his Protestant drift there was at any rate a little more than a mere bowing to the necessities of policy, something worthier, something of a decidedly religious kind. Under his influence Henry nearly consented to a change of ritual which would have been much more than a change of ritual, and would have meant an abandonment of that doctrine of transubstantiation on which the King had insisted so strenuously until now.[1] The authoritative and official consent was, however, after all withheld; and only the facts that Henry nominated the Earl of Hertford, a known favourer of the Protestants, as President of the Council of Regency in which the government was to be vested during the minority of his successor, and that from the same Council Bishop Gardiner, stoutest champion of orthodoxy,[2] was expressly excluded, enable us to form some guess as to the point of the religious compass whereto Henry's mind was veering at the time he died.[3]

As the net result of Henry's religious interference in religious affairs, then, we have a series of changes which, though superficially religious and on the whole tending in the Protestant direction, were neither Protestant nor religious in their inner motive and content. And what this signifies for the Nonconformist spirit (and it is, of course, on that side that we are chiefly concerned with it here) may be easily summed up. Through Henry's policy, through his break

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[1] Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, ii. 364, 365.

[2] He had, however, in spite of his doctrinal orthodoxy, been subservient enough to write, in 1535, a treatise—*De Vera Obedientia*—against Papal jurisdiction in England. Mr. Philip Sidnie (*Modern Rome in Modern England*, p. 21) counts Gardiner as one of the "English Gallicans"—that is, one of the school of Bishops who "had persistently defended the national privileges against the usurpations of the Popes." But it is difficult to reconcile this supposition with Gardiner's conduct in Mary's reign. It seems a fair verdict that he trimmed his sails to the wind of the hour.

[3] Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), III. i. 455; Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), iv. 509.

with Rome and through such doctrinal reconstruction as he
carried out, certain things were accomplished which would
indeed have been welcomed by the Nonconformist spirit
had it been one of the energising factors of the situation—
which would indeed have been imperiously dictated by the
Nonconformist spirit had it stood regnant upon the field—
but which, just because they sprang from a motive not
religious at all, did but set greater obstacles in the path of
the Nonconformist spirit, postpone its day, and make its
task all the harder when at length it began to play its part.
We have seen that in the work of the Revival of Learning,
on its religious side, lay the promise of such a religious
revolution as the Nonconformist spirit would require.   But
that revolution remained in the realm of might-have-been ;
and history has no such tale to recount.   We have seen that,
after the failure of that possibility, the next best thing would
have been that the real Protestantism of Henry's time should
have dominated the course of events, and moulded the
religious changes that were going on.   Even so, Non-
conformity would still have found its work to do ; but, since
the ruling impulse in the religious realm would itself have
remained religious, the further religious developments which
Nonconformity demanded would have found the way pre-
pared.   But this, again, is not the tale that history has to
tell.   And inasmuch as from other than religious motives,
and under other than religious impulses, some of the changes
in harmony with the Nonconformist spirit were brought
about, the later protests and questionings and suggestions of
Nonconformity were to a great extent discounted in their
power.   Precisely because so much had been done, did the
Nonconformist spirit seem to lay itself open to the charge
of wanton disturbance when it called for yet more ; and
precisely because what had been done had no religious
source, was it impossible, or at least difficult, for those who
guarded the established order to appreciate the only reply
to the charge which the Nonconformist spirit could make.
It was, one might perhaps say, a case in which the good
proved the enemy of the best.   The student who, keeping
in his hand the thread of the continuity of history, looks on
from the appearance of the Nonconformist spirit in John

Wiclif to the later appearance of it of which we shall soon have to speak, and asks in what way that later appearance was helped or hindered by the events of the intervening years, is driven to the conclusion that the quasi-reformation of Henry the Eighth, though to the superficial glance it may look like a herald going before Nonconformity to prepare its way and make its paths straight, in reality only rendered steeper the hill which Nonconformity had to climb.

CHAPTER III

EDWARD VI. AND MARY

SECTION 1

The Period as Parenthesis

THE significance of the period comprised in the reigns of Edward the Sixth and Mary is best understood if the period be regarded as a period of parenthesis. In the time of Henry the Eighth, as we have seen, there went on a politico-religious movement which started from the King's resolve to make his own will paramount in all things, which—working on from that starting-point—established the Royal Supremacy over the Church, and which resulted in changes that were religious and partially Protestant in inward essence and content. When we reach the time of Elizabeth, we come upon the Royal Supremacy as the dominant factor in the religious and ecclesiastical situation once more. But between Henry and Elizabeth the forces at work were much more specifically religious. These years stand out clearly differentiated from the politico-religious years which went before and the politico-religious years which came after ; for, though they were themselves politico-religious years, they were years in which religious and ecclesiastical arrangements were made less exclusively from the political side : they were years in which religion (Protestantism in the reign of Edward, Catholicism in the reign of Mary) came nearer to taking the question of religious and ecclesiastical settlement into its own hands—where of course it ought to have lain. They constitute, that is, a parenthesis in the absolute predominance of the secular element in the association between Church and State.

Superficially, doubtless, it appears strange to link together, as forming a " parenthesis " or in any other fashion, two periods which in very important respects were so strongly contrasted as were the reigns of Edward and Mary. The second reign certainly reversed the religious policy of the first.   What sort of connection can exist between the aggressive Protestantism which made such strides under Edward and the bigoted Catholicism which under Mary strove to recover, and did temporarily recover, its lost ground ?   One looks back upon the Reformation of Edward's time as marking progress, and upon the Catholic dominance of Mary's years as signalising reaction.   How is it possible to view both progress and reaction as being in any way the manifestation of something common to both ? How and why bracket the two periods thus upon history's page ?

Yet this " bracketing " is precisely what the facts require. The justification of this statement will presently appear more clearly, when the most important facts come under review. But it may be said at once that, in brief and summarised description, this is what they have to show.   We see in Edward's reign the definitely Protestant movement gathering force, stepping up from the entire subordination in which it had hitherto been kept, and claiming to be reckoned with and accepted as the predominant partner in the management of religious affairs.   Owing at first to the character of Somerset the Protector, and afterwards to the special circumstances under which Somerset was deposed from his place, Protestantism—both that of Cranmer's genuine but moderate type, and that of the more extreme and sometimes fanatical type which was being spread under influences which entered from abroad—gained in strength and, more important still, in opportunity to use it.   And used it was.   The ecclesiastical changes of these years were asked from Government by Protestantism, and, though imposed by Government upon the country, were imposed at Protestantism's own suggestion or request.   The movement of change, that is, was being initiated from a different quarter now : it was running from religious sentiment through Government, instead of from a King through

religious sentiment made to serve the kingly purposes of
the hour ; and what was expressed at the end of the
process, therefore, was religion's (of course the Protestant
religion's) mind and will.   It is not meant that even the
dominant factors of the situation had *all* their way.   As
between the more moderate and the more extreme Pro-
testantism each had to surrender something ; and between
this " compromised " Protestantism and the secular power
there had necessarily to be compromise again.   But in the
final compromise it was religion that played the principal
part : what we see in Edward's reign is religion asserting
itself as the formative and controlling influence in the
nation's ecclesiastical affairs.   But this is exactly what in
Mary's reign we see once more—only that it is Catholicism
instead of Protestantism which now forms and controls.
For, darkly as those years of persecution loom down from
the past, hastily as the modern man may cover with his
hand the pages which record them, so that the stains of
blood may not offend his eyes or wound his heart, it cannot
be questioned that the Catholic reaction under Mary was an
essentially religious movement, born out of Mary's real and
passionate devotion to the older faith.   Of course the
supreme Catholic authorities were swift to use the chance
which Mary's accession gave them : of course they eagerly
offered weapons for Mary's zeal to wield : of course their own
zeal for the reclaiming of England employed Mary's piety
to subserve its ends ; and of course the entire conduct of the
matter was immediately taken into their hands.   But they
had had their weapons ready before ; and their zeal for
England's reclamation had watched and waited through all
the years since Henry threw off the yoke of Rome.   It was
no force from outside, acting alone, that thrust England
back for awhile down the slopes she had climbed ; nor was
it a calculation of political expediencies that made Mary
beckon Roman religion and Roman authority to return.   It
was Mary's genuinely religious fervour that caused the hour
of reaction to strike.   That by such fervour Mary was
really actuated, and that the Catholic reaction she set afoot
in England was therefore, in its genesis and essence, a
religious movement, cannot be doubted.   What we see

expressed in Mary's period is religion's (of course the
Catholic religion's) mind and will.   Taking Edward's reign
and Mary's together, then, we have a "parenthesis," so to
call it, within whose limits Protestantism and Catholicism
played out their final competition so far as England is
concerned.   Religion in its two varieties got its chance—
its chance of showing what it could do.   Before and after,
there were other and interfering factors upon the field.
Before, the Royal Supremacy prescribed to religion what
place it should occupy and by what programme it should
work.   After, the Royal Supremacy took up the same
functions again.   This latter fact was in a manner natural
enough ; for one need feel no surprise, however one may
feel regret, that when the violence of Mary's reaction had
brought about a counter-reaction in its turn, and England,
having known Catholicism by its fruits, determined that it
would submit to Catholicism no more, men should safeguard
Protestantism and themselves by putting Protestantism
under the protection of the secular power, and should use
the secular arm to give Protestantism a changeless constitu-
tion and a permanent place.   Indeed (and it is here that
all this finds its chief point of contact with our main theme),
the fact that the established religious system had been set
up upon the battle-ground whence Catholicism had been
driven defeated away, rendered more difficult the protest
against the established system which Nonconformity sub-
sequently made.   But of this later.   The immediate point
is this—that the reigns of Edward and Mary, taken together,
form a period in which the decisive competition between the
two religions (each, as it were, rehearsing its part in turn)
was fought out with practically a clear field for each, so that
each could show itself as it was—or, to repeat a former
phrase, that they constitute a "parenthesis" in the absolute
predominance of the secular element in the association
between Church and State.

There is another point which in this connection is worthy
of note—a point which, like the one just dealt with, has
some significance for the special Nonconformist study wherein
we are engaged.   It is when we view the period of Edward
and Mary in the suggested light that we are enabled to take

the true line in regard to the statement that the Church of England, as we know it to-day, resulted from an arrangement or an agreement between Government and English Protestantism, and in regard to the criticism to which the statement frequently gives rise. Those who desire, in the interests of what they deem a true Catholicism and of the claims of the English Church to possess it, to maintain the continuity of the English Church with the Church of pre-Reformation times, naturally object to any view which implies that a new Church came into being, or was manufactured, by any such artificial means.[1]   Without assenting to their theory of " continuity," one may admit that the statement they object to needs considerable qualification, and that it is perhaps least true of the particular period to which it is most often applied. It is true that to the " Reformation " of the English Church both Government and Protestantism contributed a share ; but we have seen that in the time of Henry the Eighth whatever change was made came about through the *using* of Protestantism by the political power ; and in the time of Elizabeth a similar condition of things recurs, the political power making Protestantism its servant once more.   Taking the whole range of years, onward from Henry's break with Rome to Elizabeth's settlement of religious affairs, the idea of an " arrangement " between Government and Protestantism errs by ascribing to Protestantism too large a function.   The truth is that Protestantism, being present on the board, was employed by the political power as a pawn in its game, not that Protestantism treated with the political power on anything like equal terms.   But in regard to the reign of Edward the Sixth (and it is in respect of Edward's reign and its religious reforms that the idea is generally voiced) the idea errs on the other side, and scarcely yields to Protestantism the honour it deserves.   For, as has been stated, at this time (in the first half of the " parenthetical " period) Protestantism, instead of being used by the political

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[1] For instance, one writer talks of the " preposterous notion that the Church of England was created, or had its origin, at the Reformation," and criticises Macaulay for a description of the Church of England and its characteristics, based upon that idea, which is given in the first chapter of Macaulay's *History* (R. W. Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, iii. 547).

power, to some extent used the political power : though the
political power still issued the final decrees as to what the
religious orderings should be—Protestantism as a whole
having no objection to this, and actually holding it as right
—Protestantism's voice was loud, if not undisputed, in the
counsels which drafted them ; and, while the political power
was inditing the decrees, Protestantism covered and guided
the hand of the political power with its own.   This does
not belie the statement previously made—that taking the
whole range of years from Henry's break with Rome to
Elizabeth's settlement of religious affairs, there was a pre-
dominance of the secular element in the association between
Church and State.   But it qualifies it by saying that,
temporarily and at a given point of time, the religious
element held the upper hand.   It must be remembered, also,
that this temporary superiority of the religious element had
lasting effects, and that when under Elizabeth the political
power subordinated religion to itself again, it took over the
results which the religious element, in its hour of strength,
had wrought out.   It re-enacted the arrangements which
the political power, under the inspiration of Protestantism,
had made ; but it insisted that the re-enacting was in reality
an original enacting, or at any rate must be taken as such—
that it made the enactment now simply and solely because
it so willed, and under no inspiration except its own.   So
that while in the main the English Church sprang, not so
much from an equally balanced partnership between Govern-
ment and Protestantism as from an association between the
two in which Protestantism was Government's servant, there
was at least a brief period wherein Protestantism was
fashioner rather than material, brain and hand rather than
tool.   In the first half of that parenthetical period constituted
by the reigns of Edward the Sixth and Mary—the period
wherein religion came nearest to taking the religious settle-
ment into its own hands—the established religious organisa-
tion of the country achieved, under a much more definitely
religious impulse than any felt before or after, a certain
religious advance which, even when the political element
came uppermost again, it did not retract.

SECTION 2

The Settlement under Edward VI.

AUTHORITIES.—For the general history of the reign consult Wriothesley's *Chronicle*, *Literary Remains of Edward VI.*, edited by J. G. Nichols, Stow's *Annals*, P. F. Tytler's *England in the Reigns of Edward VI. and Mary*. Froude's *History* is very useful here, but Lingard is not so satisfactory. For religious affairs, the most important works are Strype's *Ecclesiastical Memorials* and Burnet's *History of the Reformation* ; and the *Ecclesiastical History* of Collier may also be consulted. Among modern books are R. W. Dixon's *History of the Church of England*, J. Gairdner's invaluable *English Church in the Sixteenth Century*, and *Edward VI. and the Book of Common Prayer*, by F. A. Gasquet and E. Bishop. The third volume of Gairdner's *Lollardy and the Reformation* deals with the period from the particular standpoint of that book. For Cranmer, see Strype's *Life*. There are various later biographies, that by A. F. Pollard being among the best.

The advance of Protestantism in the Church of England during Edward's reign falls into two parts, the advance in the second division of time being swifter than in the first. There is, it is true, little sign of any very definitely conceived goal in the minds of those who had the matter in charge, other than one of a somewhat general kind : beyond an intention that the settlement was to be Protestant, and a concurrent intention that the settlement was to result in uniformity of religious worship and practice throughout the realm, the leaders seem scarcely to have known whither they were being led. Indeed, since the bulk of the nation was not prepared for Protestantism of an extreme kind, the second intention alluded to was in a manner a check upon the first ; and a considerable amount of waiting upon circumstances necessarily took place. It has been asserted that from the first there was a definite plan for the establishment of Calvinism as the Church of England creed, and that every change made in Edward's reign was made with that end in view.[1] But facts do not seem to support the contention. Cranmer, the prime mover in the whole thing —at any rate the man by whom the decisive word from the religious side had to be spoken—possessed no such clearness and fulness of conviction as the theory assumes. Sincerely Protestant he was, beyond a doubt ; but on some doctrinal

[1] See an article by Rev. N. Pocock on " The Reformation Settlement of the English Church," in the *English Historical Review*, i. 677.

points his opinions were unfixed, and he appears to have been very much at the mercy of influences brought to bear on him by other minds. In the matter of sacramental doctrine, for example, he spoke with varying voices ; and it is even now matter of dispute where, at the time of the first Prayer Book, he stood.[1]   In brief, Cranmer, while having certain largely outlined objects in mind, and being so far as these were concerned firmly set, nevertheless within these limits found the currents and let himself drift.   But in respect of these largely outlined objects—the Protestantising of the Church of England and the securing of uniformity —there was a steady progress throughout the reign, and a faster progress in its second division than in its first. Although as regards some particular steps, feet may have moved with something of uncertainty and have been somewhat waveringly set down, the general direction was persistently maintained.

The Duke of Somerset, who (as Earl of Hertford) had been appointed by Henry to the Presidency of the Council, and who was the virtual ruler of the kingdom from 1547 to 1549, was a man of tolerant temper and broad mind ; and his natural impulse was to fling the door of license wide. It was evident that the method on which Henry himself had worked—the method of repudiating Roman authority while on the whole preserving and enforcing Roman doctrines— had broken down.   The conviction that this was so showed itself in the earliest measures of the new reign ; for the Act of Six Articles was repealed, permission was given to print and expound the Scriptures in the English tongue, and the Royal Supremacy, though it was not to be questioned in writing, might without incurring any penalty be denied in spoken word.[2]   Probably it was for such a removal of restrictions, rather than for any constructive ecclesiastical work, that Somerset chiefly cared : from all we know of him, we are justified in concluding that, having unsealed men's lips, he would have been well content to let the resulting clamour settle down to what ultimate unanimity or lack of unanimity it might: as between Catholicism and Protestantism,

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[1] See R. W. Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, ii. 544-546.
[2] Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), v. 63, 64.

he was neither cold nor hot. But circumstances made impossible any such policy of *laissez-faire*. The larger liberty which Somerset gave led immediately to the uprising of a Babel of conflicting tongues ; and those who desired, as practically everybody did, to reduce the religion of the country to a common level were driven to act. Indeed, if there were to be a Church of England at all, with authoritative formularies and appointed methods of worship, Somerset's liberalism must necessarily be put aside. There were many variations of thought and practice among those who were moving in the Protestant direction ; and besides this, the proclamation in Germany of the *Interim* [1] (a compromise between Protestantism and Catholicism which was intended to hold the field until the Council of Trent should come to a final decision) by the Emperor Charles the Fifth drove a number of foreign divines of differing schools, to whom the said compromise was anathema, to the country where Protestantism seemed safe to win. Among them Peter Martyr, Fagius, and Bucer may be named ; and the presence of these theologians, representing as they did various shades of opinion on the sacraments and other points, both made it all the more necessary to reach a settlement and influenced the settlement at which England under Cranmer's guidance arrived. Anabaptists and Socinians, also, reached a number and a prominence that called for stringent measures on the part of those to whom uniformity was a cherished ideal and who still held any divergence of religious view from the accepted standards to be a crime. Altogether, both within the Church itself and beyond it, there was disintegration, or at any rate absence of definiteness and shape. Worse things than even this have been said. Some have endeavoured to show that the change of religion which was in progress was accompanied by and responsible for a lamentable degeneration of conduct, and that immorality and other vices were rampant among the Protestant leaders and clergy of Edward's time. There is little evidence of this, except in a few isolated instances ; and, in the absence of evidence, one need do no more than say that probably there were

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[1] On the *Interim*, see A. F. Pollard in *Cambridge Modern History*, ii. 264-266, or Gairdner, *Lollardy and the Reformation*, iii. 155-158.

some evil-living Protestant clergy as there had been some evil-living Catholic clergy before them. It is significant that one modern writer,[1] though seemingly inclined to believe the general charge, can adduce, when it comes to the point, little else than considerable laxity of opinion and practice in regard to the position of the communion table, the reality and efficacy of sacramental grace, and similar ceremonial and doctrinal matters ; and another [2] is driven to quote principally from some sermons of Latimer — himself, of course, a Protestant preacher—which might find their application in any congregation gathered at any time within any church's walls. Still, without accepting charges such as these, we may well believe that at the beginning of Edward's reign religious and ecclesiastical affairs were to a great extent " without form and void," and in urgent need of some formative spirit to move upon the face of the waters. Henry's attempted settlement had failed : the mere liberalism to which Somerset leant would not make a stable and definitely ordained English Protestant Church ; nor did any natural evolution to a satisfactory religious position seem possible out of the warring forces that were at work. Those who wished to see order emerge from chaos were clearly called upon for action of a most decided kind.

Of the Anabaptists and Socinians just mentioned a word had better be said here (since somewhere or other it must be said), if only to prevent, in regard to the first, a misapprehension which in some quarters still finds voice. The Anabaptists are not to be looked upon as identified with, or as being the ancestors of, the great Baptist denomination which has played so great a part in Nonconformist history. Confusion on this point has frequently prevailed, and the mistake has been perpetrated and re-perpetrated by historians up to quite recent times. The rise of the Baptists properly so called will be dealt with later on. If, however, we seek for their forerunners, or for those who, while not Baptists in the full modern significance of the term, may be looked upon as preparers of the way, we find them, not in the

[1] Rev. N. Pocock, " The Condition of Morals and Religious Belief in the Reign of Edward VI." (*English Historical Review*, x. 417).
[2] J. H. Blunt, *The Reformation of the Church in England*, ii. 152-156.

Anabaptists, but in the line of certain more or less obscure people who, from Wiclif's time and perhaps from a yet earlier period, objected to having their children baptized after the customary rule of the Church.   In speaking of the Anabaptists of Edward the Sixth's reign, Burnet is careful to distinguish between two sorts—the real fact being that to the second sort the name Anabaptist ought not to be applied at all.   The name seems, however, to have been cast indiscriminately as a name of reproach at "heretics" of almost every order.   For instance, in referring to some who were brought before the Council in 1550 for various ecclesiastical offences, Burnet remarks, "These were probably some of the Anabaptists, though that is not objected to them."[1]   The designation was evidently indeterminate enough to serve for any who could not be otherwise labelled. But even Burnet sometimes discriminated.   Having spoken of the more violent Anabaptists of Edward's reign, he goes on to remark that there was another class of them, holding that baptism should be given only to adults capable of instruction and earnestly desiring it—an opinion which they grounded on the silence of the New Testament concerning the baptism of children ;[2] and although this is not, of course, the full Baptist doctrine as we know it, it may be looked upon as its germ.   It has been said that traces of such ideas, or of ideas closely allied, may be discovered still further back ; and we come upon one clear instance of them in John Pykas, one of those arrested in 1527,[3] who among other things objected to baptism, "saying that there was no baptism but of the Holy Ghost."[4]   It is in such ideas as these that the parentage—or if not the parentage, at any rate the heralding—of the later full-fledged Baptist doctrine must be sought.   But Anabaptism, strictly so termed, was a different thing.   The Anabaptists, although they too repudiated baptismal doctrine as held by the orthodox, were in truth social revolutionaries much more than they were religious reformers : their baptismal or anti-baptismal views were merely one item, and a comparatively insignificant one, in a

[1] *History of the Reformation* (ed. Pocock), iii. 359.   [2] *Ibid.* ii. 202.
[3] *Supra*, p. 94.
[4] Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), I. i. 122.

long list of heretical and anarchical ideas ; and in various places on the Continent (for it was on the Continent they took their rise) they had gone far to annihilate civil authority and to bring about social chaos.[1] They aimed at the overturning of the existing political and social order in favour of a political and social millennium as their fanaticism conceived it, and shrank from no method, however violent, of compassing their ends.   There had been more than one Anabaptist immigration into England in the time of Henry the Eighth ; and in 1534 the King issued an edict, in which, " to save his loving subjects from falling into any erroneous opinions," these mischief-makers, who " in contempt of the holy sacrament of baptism . . . have of their own presumption and authority re-baptized themselves," were ordered to quit the land.[2]   Apparently they did not go ; for we find other commissions and edicts designed to deal with them as the years went by.[3]   The sect, however, had no promise or potency enduring life : on the Continent a mere remnant of it was at last purified of its grosser elements and survived as the Mennonite Church ; and in England, although the Anabaptists formed congregations in various places, they speedily degenerated into mere faddists and eccentrics, often ridiculous, sometimes immoral, only occasionally dangerous, and by the close of the sixteenth century have passed from sight.[4]   The Fifth-Monarchy men of the Commonwealth period, with whom we shall meet later, may be looked on as in a sense their successors, since it was a mingled religious and revolutionary propaganda that they, like the Anabaptists, carried on ; but the later party, if it was the successor of the earlier, was hardly its actual child.   It should perhaps be mentioned here, to obviate recurrence to the matter later on, that on two or three occasions in Elizabeth's reign there were arrests of Anabaptists

[1] See E. Belfort Bax, *Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists.*

[2] Wilkins' *Concilia,* iii. 779.

[3] For a summary, see J. H. Blunt, *The Reformation of the Church in England,* i. 551-554.

[4] See E. Belfort Bax, *Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists,* chap. x., for a brief account of some of the later Anabaptist sects, such as Familists, Essentialists, Libertines, etc.   Others, such as Enthusiasts, Grindletonians, Hetheringtonians, etc., are mentioned in books of reference like Marsden's *Dictionary of Christian Churches and Sects,* or Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.*

some of whom were executed and some expelled.[1]   But
Anabaptism never obtained any real hold in the land,
was merely a sojourner within its borders for a brief space,
and remained entirely an excrescence upon English religious
life during the period of its stay—so that after this brief
mention of it, it may well, except as an occasional passing
allusion may be necessary, drop from our tale.   Socinianism[2]
proved itself a much more important and enduring thing.
Between Anabaptism and Socinianism a certain relation can
be traced ; and some few, though not many, of the Ana-
baptists held distinctly Socinian opinions.[3]   It is probable
also that such of the Anabaptists as did not fall into the
eccentric developments just spoken of, and did not hold the
most extreme tenets of Anabaptism on its social side, may
have emerged into Socinianism at last.   The majority of the
early Anabaptists, however, while denying that Jesus took
flesh of a human mother, contrived to combine this opinion
with Trinitarian opinions concerning the nature of God.
Socinianism was of course anti-Trinitarian, and was, besides,
altogether a more carefully reasoned matter than the
fanaticism of the Anabaptists permitted their views to be.
The stream of religious life and thought which finds its
source in Socinianism—the Unitarianism which traces its
pedigree back to that original Socinian starting-point—has
counted for a good deal in the religious history of England ;
and of this there will be more to say.

Reverting to the general ecclesiastical situation, let it be
recalled how Cranmer pursued the two-fold object of Pro-
testantising the Church and obtaining uniformity throughout
the land—and, further, how the first intention required that
there should not be too little reform, while the second required

[1] Lingard groups the instances, giving authorities, in his *History of England*
(ed. 1855), vi. 169, 170.   A proclamation of Elizabeth's (1580) against the
"sectaries of the Family of Love," may be seen in Sparrow's *Collections*
(4th ed.), p. 171.

[2] The name "Socinianism" is, however, hardly appropriate at this period, as
it was not till later that Socinus constructed his system.   On Socinianism strictly
so called, see Krasinski, *History of the Reformation in Poland*, ii. 364 ff.   For a
more distinctly theological account of it, see Dorner's *History of the Development
of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ* (translated by D. W. Simon in Clark's
Foreign Theological Library), Division II. vol. ii. pp. 249-265.

[3] On the relation between Socinianism and Anabaptism, see G. Bonet-Maury
(trans. E. P. Hall), *Early Sources of English Unitarian Christianity*, pp. 44-51.

that there should not be too much.   Over and above this, it
has to be noted that there was a certain weakness in Cranmer's
pursuit of both items in the programme ; for his indecisive-
ness of opinion on some doctrinal points made him hesitate
occasionally as to where the line between " too little " and
" too much " was to be drawn ; and as to uniformity, the very
value he set upon it seems to have deterred him from extreme
measures for its establishment, lest by forcing them rapidly
and far the absence of uniformity should be too glaringly
revealed.   Remembrance of these points makes many things
clear, and enables us to perceive a sort of unity in Cranmer's
superficially vacillating or variously paced course.   The early
changes under Protector Somerset indicated clearly enough
that the Church of England was to be reformed in the
Protestant sense.   Injunctions were issued commanding the
removal of images and pictures in cases where their presence
led to superstitious worship, prescribing the English language
for the reading of the Gospels and Epistles, regulating the
number of lights upon the altar, and decreeing a " kneeling "
instead of a " processional " recitation of the Litany : com-
munion in both kinds was authorised ; and various other
changes, all tending in the same direction, were brought
about.   Yet Cranmer's essential moderation appeared in the
fact that when reform seemed likely to become riotous, the
brake was speedily applied.   Those who thought themselves
at liberty to eat meat in Lent were checked : those who
showed slighting or contempt to the priests were sternly
reproved ; and those who spoke irreverently of the Sacrament
were, under a special Parliamentary Act, subjected to im-
prisonment or fine.[1]   Still, the movement in the Protestant
direction was swift and far.   The most significant, at least
the most carefully ordered, manifestation of it was in the
new Book of Common Prayer, about whose origin and com-
pilation considerable mystery is gathered, but which was
finally passed by Parliament in 1549, Somerset's closing
year of power.[2]   The differences between the new order of
service and the old were numerous and marked, and tended,

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[1] Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England*,
i. 26-29.
[2] Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), II. i. 136.

all of them, to what may be called the "popularising" of worship, the making it into a partnership between minister and congregation rather than a service performed by the priest on the congregation's behalf.[1]   This, of course, indicated unmistakably the Protestant trend.   In regard to the Communion service, however, considerable ambiguity remained. There were signs enough to show that change was meant. There was no clear indication as to how far change was meant to go.   And on the crucial point—that of the degree in which the idea of transubstantiation was retained—doubt was greatest of all.   Probably, as has been already remarked, Cranmer's views on sacramental matters were yet unfixed ; or else he was unprepared to force to a crisis what he regarded, and what he knew others would regard, as the most momentous issue of all.   At any rate, while it was thought by many that during the discussions previous to the promulgation of the Prayer Book, Cranmer maintained the merely commemorative view of the ordinance, these same people who had prematurely congratulated themselves on the triumph of their cause were acutely disappointed with the actual book when it appeared.   The Communion order can, in fact, be read in more senses than one.   Indeed, whatever the opinion of Cranmer or of any other reformers may have been, anything like an official endorsement of "lower" views of the Sacrament had been carefully avoided hitherto : in the proclamation against "irreverent talkers of the sacrament," just now alluded to, it had been asserted of the elements that "the body and blood of Christ is there" ;[2] so that, among this and other pronouncements, some looking in a similar direction and others in a contrary one, the real intentions behind could only be surmised.   As it was, the new Prayer Book was by no means universally welcomed, and the new Communion order savoured sufficiently of heresy to excite in many quarters suspicion and dislike.[3]   In Cornwall many

[1] For an interesting detailed summary of the changes, see R. W. Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, iii. 15-36.   An illustration of how particular Churches were affected may be found in an article by A. G. B. Atkinson (*English Historical Review*, xi. 522-527) entitled *Reformation Changes in A City Parish.*

[2] Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England*, i. 27.

[3] Hume remarks in this connection that the doctrine of the Real Presence "was the last doctrine of Popery that was wholly abandoned by the people," and adds rather sarcastically, but not without some truth, that "the chief cause was

protested against it, demanding, in fact, a return to Roman
Catholicism pure and simple ; [1] and many more through the
country, while not proceeding as did the Cornishmen to
actual revolt, were possessed by much the same objections
and desires as they.   We must not conclude that at any time
while the Reformation of the Church of England was in
progress, ardent Protestantism, had there been a counting of
heads, would necessarily have commanded an overwhelming
majority of votes.   For that matter, even after the Catholic
reaction under Mary had taught, or might be supposed to
have taught, its bitter lesson—even in Elizabeth's reign—it
must have been far more than an insignificant minority that
held to the ancient creeds.[2]   Certainly in the time of Edward
those who had the Reformation in their charge had need, if
prudential considerations were to be taken into account at
all, to walk warily ; and Cranmer's reconstruction of the
Prayer Book and of the sacramental order, if it had about it
little or nothing heroic, little or nothing that rang out a
challenging note of conviction, was at least politically wise.
And when every allowance is made for the temporising which,
be the reasons what they may, was in some important
matters adopted, it remains true that the religious measures
of Somerset's Protectorate, taken as a whole, indicated a
decided Protestant advance.

But afterwards the advance went further.   Somerset fell
from power in 1549 ; and under the rule of the Earl of
Warwick reform was pressed.   Warwick was himself, if
anything, a Catholic ; and it is said by Burnet that he " was
all this while a concealed Papist, as himself declared at his
execution." [3]   Nevertheless, it best served the chances of his
ambition to appear as the Reformers' friend.   If for a moment
some of the Catholics had hoped for a return to the older
order of things, they were speedily undeceived ; while the
Protestants, blinded or blinding themselves to the real

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really the extreme absurdity of the principle itself, and the profound veneration
which of course it impressed on the imagination " (*History of England*, ed.
1789, iv. 322).

[1] Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), II. i. 143.

[2] On the relative numbers of Catholics and Protestants in the sixteenth
century, see some remarks in Macaulay's essay on " Burleigh and his Times."

[3] *History of the Reformation* (ed. Pocock), iii. 358.

character of the man, hailed Warwick as the heaven-sent champion of their cause. Many of them were but half-satisfied with what had been already done. If in the time of Somerset Cranmer had been easily able to restrain excess, this was not so light a task when the extremists found encouragement in the virtual head of the State. More than once the Archbishop's ideal of a Church, reformed and at the same time settled in uniformity, seemed to be jeopardised by men more passionately ardent than himself. But on the whole, as he had succeeded hitherto in securing enough change, so he now succeeded in averting the "too much"; and in the end most of the accomplished changes may be taken as fairly reflecting Cranmer's mind and will. The foreign theologians, however, exerted a considerable influence. The effect of their presence was being increasingly felt. Each of the two Universities had a foreigner for its divinity professor—Bucer being at Cambridge and Peter Martyr at Oxford;[1] and just before Somerset's fall disputations between representatives of the older ideas and those of the new had been officially arranged—it being clearly understood, however, that the representatives of the new were to win. Fresh statutes, also, conceived from the Protestant stand-point, had been made for both educational seats, and many of the orthodox teachers had been dismissed. When the reins of power dropped into Warwick's hands, the faster reforming tendency began to get at any rate something of its way, not only in the Universities, but upon the wider ecclesiastical field. A Commission was appointed for the revision of ecclesiastical laws[2]—although it should be added that its findings, having been reported only a little while before Edward's death, having remained unvalidated by his signature, and having been thrown aside by Elizabeth, never became operative: it was ordered that altars were to be destroyed, and replaced by tables set at the centre of the churches: a new "Ordinal," or service of consecration for all ranks of the clergy, was drawn up: the Forty-Two Articles (practically identical with the present Thirty-Nine)[3] were

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[1] Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), II. i. 189.

[2] Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, iii. 159.

[3] The Forty-Two Articles became Thirty-Eight after their first revision under Elizabeth. Article twenty-nine was omitted, and there were a few other

promulgated ; and finally a new Prayer Book, still further revised in the Protestant sense, was in 1552 substituted for the Prayer Book of 1549.[1]   In all these new appointments and regulations—though with less absolute decisiveness in the Articles than in the rest—the advance in the Protestant direction was very definitely marked.   The moderating touch of Cranmer had doubtless been laid upon them all in the process of their forming ; but Cranmer's own genuine Protestantism—as well as the necessity of bowing in measure to the strong forces at work around him, in order that compromise might save the situation from passing utterly under their sway—had secured the sounding of the louder Protestant note.   In the preparation of the second Prayer Book the foreign theologians named just now undoubtedly had no inconsiderable share.   Peter Martyr and Bucer were both asked for their counsel and help ; and Bucer's comments on the first Book and his suggestions for the second were embodied in a somewhat lengthy treatise which he submitted in response to Cranmer's request.[2]   To add to the force of this persuasion, Calvin himself wrote from Geneva to Cranmer, reminding the Archbishop that men would go forward if he inspired them and would hesitate if he stood still, and remarking that if he had only shown more resolution three years before, there would have been less trouble now.[3]   In the end all this told.   Whatever the Articles may have been, the order for the Sacrament, as laid down in the new Prayer Book, was Protestant enough : it was scarcely possible to read it, as it had been possible to read the first, in any Catholic sense ; and the promulgation of a Communion doctrine which was scarcely sacramental at all in the older fashion, and which almost reduced the ordinance of the Lord's Supper to a merely commemorative rite, is perhaps the supreme proof of how greatly Protestantism had its way in Warwick's time.

changes.   In the final revision of 1571 article twenty-nine was restored.   See Kidd's *Thirty-Nine Articles*, i. chaps. iii. and iv.

[1] Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), II. ii. 20, 21.

[2] Bucer's *Censura*.   This may be found in his *Scripta Anglicana*, p. 456. There is also an abridged translation, with analysis, by Rev. Arthur Roberts.

[3] For this letter see Calvin's *Opera*, ix. 61, or the English translation of Jules Bonnet's *Letters of Calvin*, ii. 341.

With a glance at the measures taken to obtain uni-
formity, our survey of the picture within the ecclesiastical
frame may be taken as complete.   It has already been said
that while Cranmer was bent on uniformity, he was not
the man to ride rough-shod over all obstacles between him
and his goal—and this, in part, because to do so would
have been to show how far off uniformity still remained.
This is not, of course, to say that the spirit of toleration had
begun to appear : neither Cranmer nor any other Protestant
leader at home or abroad had reached the point of looking
upon toleration as a duty, or even as a desirable grace.
But what we see in the Archbishop's efforts after uniformity
is, throughout, the pressure which would not push itself too
far, and which, even while it was doing its work, seemed to
hesitate from fear of endangering its own end.   It is true
that in respect of heretics holding Anabaptist or Socinian
views, these considerations did not come into play.   These
recalcitrants were probably looked upon as being so far
removed from both the older and newer faith that the
realisation of the ideal of uniformity could hardly be either
hastened or hindered by any treatment they received.   Yet
even of these only two—Joan Bocher and George van Parris[1]
— are known to have been sent to the stake.   And in
regard to other disobediences, Cranmer's methods followed
the line indicated above.   Both the first and the second
Prayer Books were accompanied by Acts of Uniformity ;[2]
but the first of them was limited to the clergy ; and the
second, though more stringent (perhaps because the Duke
of Northumberland[3] was at the time of the Book's issue
conciliating the Protestant extremists for reasons of his
own) and insisting on attendance at public worship,
attached only ecclesiastical penalties to neglect, reserving
imprisonment, and going no further than imprisonment, as
the punishment for taking part in religious assemblies of
an unauthorised kind.[4]   It could not be expected that on

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[1] Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, iii. 237, 272, 273.   Joan
Bocher had been a friend of Anne Askew.   Parris was a Flemish surgeon who
had been expelled for heresy from the foreign Church at Austin Friars mentioned
on p. 138.   [2] *Ibid.* iii. 1 ff., 431 ff.
[3] Warwick had taken this title in 1551.
[4] Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, as previous note.

any theory of the English Church which took it as a body wherein the entire nation ought to be compulsorily embraced, religious meetings of an "outside" character should be allowed ; and, however one may regret the adoption of such a theory, one must recognise that its consequences, once it was adopted, were inevitable, and one must at any rate acknowledge the comparative mildness (if the general temper of the age be borne in mind) of the means whereby it was enforced. Then, apart from any such theory of the Church as that just alluded to, it was impossible that clergy of the older faith holding places in the Church should, in defiance of reform and with their former opinions and practices unchanged, be suffered to remain where they were. Gardiner and Bonner were sent, the one to the Fleet and the other to the Marshalsea [1]—both of them coming finally to the Tower, where they remained till Mary's accession—for refusal to accept the religious changes of the reign ; and some other Bishops who scrupled at perfect obedience were removed from their sees.[2] But the records in relation to Gardiner and Bonner show how opportunity on opportunity of compliance was given and appeal after appeal was made ; and all through it is, if we are choosing our words with care, of pressure rather than of persecution that we have to speak. The distinction may appear subtle ; but when one recalls the general ecclesiastical methods of those times, it means a good deal. And, in passing, it may at least be set to the credit of Protestantism that, although toleration was still below the horizon, it displayed, in these first days of its power, however imperfect the underlying motives may have been, a spirit so different from that to which Catholicism had accustomed the eyes of men. Cranmer's ruling conception of the Church, if on the one hand it forced him to something like compulsion, on the other hand drew him to something like mildness. His dream was of a Reformed Church which, though reformed, should preserve as much as might be of the splendid grandeur which the ancient Church could claim— the grandeur of unity, at least : over against the Church of Rome was to rise another Church no less homogeneous, and

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[1] Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, ii. 443 ; iii. 143.
[2] Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), v. 212, 414, 490.

consequently no less impressive in its purified strength : indeed, the Reformed Church to whose uprising he looked was to be a Reformed Church of Europe, rather than a Reformed Church of England alone.   He actually made more than one movement that tended to the furtherance of this end.[1]   And though the plan was never realised, and was perhaps in the nature of the case incapable of realisation, the spirit out of which it was born showed itself in all Cranmer's policy at home.   Uniformity could only be secured by some amount of pressure, and pressure was therefore applied.   But on the other hand, the spectacle of a reformed Church engaged in patent and continued conflict with refractory minds would be a sign that the dream had been dreamt in vain ; wherefore pressure must not go to extremes, and the weapons of mere vengeance must not be employed.   In other matters besides the treatment of the Catholic bishops and priests, one perceives the influence of Cranmer's ideal and of that apparently indeterminate idea of discipline which it inspired.   When Hooper was presented to the bishopric of Gloucester, and declined it because of his objections to vestments and to invocation of the saints, he was brought, would he or would he not, into a lengthened controversy with all the other bishops, until at length—a few weeks in the Fleet having completed the process of persuasion—he gave way.[2]   Cranmer was as ready to lay his hand upon the men of his own side as upon the men of the other ; and it was precisely the same description of restrained coercion—if the phrase may stand —that was resorted to for both.   When John à Lasco,[3] fleeing from the *Interim*, came to England to establish an exile Church at Austin Friars, in which Germans and other foreign Protestants [4] might celebrate their worship, difficulty

[1] For instance, in 1549 and again in 1552.   See Letters to Melanchthon, Bullinger, and Calvin, given in Cranmer's *Remains*, i. 337, 344, 346.   They may also be found in the *Original Letters relative to the English Reformation*, edited for the Parker Society by Rev. Hastings Robinson, i. 21, 22, 24.

[2] Burnet, *History of the Reformation* (ed. Pocock), iii. 352-355.

[3] For the life of John à Lasco, see Krasinski's *History of the Reformation in Poland*, i. 238-275.

[4] It is stated by one writer that there were no less than four thousand German Protestants in London in 1549 (Henry E. Jacobs, *The Lutheran Movement in England*, p. 208).

was at first made about the independence claimed by the congregation from the jurisdiction of Ridley, Bishop of London, and about certain of their rites which differed from those of the English Church. But if the idea of unity seemed from one point of view to forbid concession on these points, it seemed equally from another point of view to demand it ; for refusal to concede would at once have been the open negation of the uniformity which was so much desired ; and by concession at least the appearance of it, if not the full reality, would be secured. A Lasco, therefore, had his will.[1]   It is not suggested, of course, that Cranmer's single voice decided all such questions as these ; but his position necessarily gave him the dominant part. And as in these things, so throughout, we find that because uniformity was so earnestly wished for it was pressed — yet that, just because it was so earnestly desired, it was not pressed too fast or far.

The general outline of the Anglican reformation will now be sufficiently clear. It will also be evident that, in the main, the Church under Edward the Sixth settled down upon lines which have been adhered to until now. Yet it is significant that the Nonconformist spirit came to open manifestation just at the time when the settlement was hardening into shape ; and we have at this juncture the same phenomenon as we have at a little later stage when settlement was following upon temporary unsettlement once more. It is as though whenever the supremacy of organisation is, whether deliberately or by force of circumstances, thrust to the front, the waiting Nonconformist spirit were moved to break protestingly into the circle before it closes. As in the days of Elizabeth, when, after the Catholic reaction was over and the Protestant reorganisation was completed or close upon its end, the Nonconformist principle found earnest voice and concrete, self-conscious (so to call it) embodiment, so in the days of Edward, as organisation emerged, the Nonconformist principle, with less definite utterance and with less understanding of itself, it is true, but none the less unmistakably, lifted up its head. The reference is not to

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[1] Another foreign congregation was established at Glastonbury. See Strype's *Cranmer*, Book II., chaps. xxii. and xxiii.

the protests of Hooper already referred to, though Hooper
has sometimes been termed the "father of Nonconformity."
It would be more correct to say that both Hooper and
Nonconformity were co-descendants of a spirit which gave
birth to both, but which expressed itself more fully in the
second than in the first.   Hooper had undoubtedly a strong
objection to all ceremonial observances, to all ecclesiastical
programmes and trappings, for which New Testament
authority could not be adduced ; and in his dread lest things
of this sort should overshadow the supreme importance of
the inward life the Nonconformist spirit was certainly at
work.   But it is not in Hooper that we come upon the
strongest manifestation of the Nonconformist spirit even in
Edward's reign.   He might legitimately be called the father
of those less pronounced manifestations of it given by the
Puritanism which remained within the established Church ;
but the stronger and more positive Nonconformity of later
days had stronger and more positive ancestors than he.   It
is in the " sectaries " of whom Strype[1] speaks that these are
found—the men who were haled before the authorities for
assembling in unauthorised ways, and for discussing points
of doctrine which the voice of the Church was supposed to
have fixed.   It is not meant that these separatists had any
clear conception of the Church to oppose to the established
conception of the time.   If we look on them as moved by
the Nonconformist spirit, we do not take them as having
elaborated a Nonconformist theory.   But moved by the
Nonconformist spirit they certainly were.   They had at any
rate felt that the existing religious organisation was essenti-
ally unable to minister to their spiritual need.   The only
record of these people, whom we would like to know so well,
is in the documents recording their appearance before
ecclesiastical or other courts ;[2] and from these we learn that
at Bocking in Essex and at Faversham in Kent there were

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[1] *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), II. i. 369, 370 ; *Life of Cranmer*, i.
334, 335.
[2] These documents (British Museum Harleian MS., 421, folio 133) have
been printed in full by R. W. Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, iii.
207, 208.   Mr. Dixon appends some extracts from the *Council Book* con-
nected with the matter, most of which may also be seen in Burnet, *History of the
Reformation* (ed. Pocock), iii. 358.

" congregations " which had definitely severed themselves
from the official Church. How often they met, whether
regularly or irregularly, we do not know ; but they were
evidently not entirely without organisation, for the members
of the Faversham body were charged before the Council that
they had associated themselves with the sectaries of Bocking,
so that something like intercommunication had been set
up ; and there are hints of systematic monetary contribution
besides. Their numbers, too, were not altogether in-
significant : " forty or more " are said to have gathered at
the house of " Upchard of Bocking," though some of these
were Kentish men.[1] To predestination, among other points
of doctrine, many of these men were determinedly opposed ;
and questions as to the right attitude in prayer, as to how
far one might communicate with " sinners," and as to children
and original sin, also echo faintly in the depositions which
the witnesses made. Most of the " sectaries " would seem to
have been " unlearned and ignorant men," as certain not
quite uninfluential apostles had been before them ; and
writers have not hesitated to sneer at the " cowherds and
clothiers " with whom concrete Nonconformity began. It
may perhaps be said—as a principle capable of applications
beyond this present instance—that an uneducated mind may
sometimes imply an untrammelled heart, that in a personality
of this order the native movements of the religious life may
have freer course, that this free movement of life may,
simply because it is spontaneously proceeding, raise questions
natural to, and important for, the religious life itself, and
that while the answers given may not be the best, the raising
of the questions shows at least that they ought to be raised.
To complete the account of these " sectaries," it should be
added that some of them objected to infant baptism,[2] so that
we have in them further instances of that " other sort " of
Anabaptists of whom, as we saw, Burnet speaks ;[3] and that
others of them seem to have had no quarrel at all on points
of doctrine with the Church of England, and are not proved
even to have neglected the Church's services or ordinances,

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[1] *Council Book*, as quoted by Dixon.
[2] Strype, as former reference.
[3] *Supra*, p. 128.

but simply met for worship and preaching on other than
the officially appointed days.   Even against these, however,
Chancellor Rich took proceedings, being moved, as he him-
self averred, by a fear lest the people should fall into idleness
—whereon Strype quaintly remarks, " But I suppose the
truth was, he was afraid the knowledge of the Gospel should
spread too much." [1]   To the observer there is something
quietly pathetic about the spectacle of these last-named
associations—associations which found their bond of union,
not in definite ideas of either a positive or negative order,
but in an instinctive need of something more than the Church,
even with an organisation growing fast to its final form, could
give them—associations which testified, by their coming to-
gether outside the ministry of the official Church, how, after
the ministry of the official Church had done its best, the
spirit of life, the spirit which hungered for life and for life's
bread, the spirit which started the spiritual initiative from
within rather than from without, stirred unsatisfied within
them still.

Under Edward the Sixth, the process of organisation
moved fast to its goal.   But, as if called into activity by the
very swiftness of the process and by the intense assiduity of
the care lavished upon carrying it through, the Nonconformist
spirit hoisted signals, in token that not along that way did
true and satisfying religion lie.

SECTION 3

The Catholic Reaction under Mary

AUTHORITIES.—Mainly as for the previous section, except that one or two of
the works mentioned there do not, as their titles indicate, touch Mary's reign.
For the martyrdoms, see Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, though with the caution
as to its use previously given.   J. M. Stone's *History of Mary I., Queen of
England*, may be added as embodying a survey of the reign from the Catholic
standpoint.

For the purposes of this history, the reign of Mary may
be lightly touched and speedily dismissed.   For all its terror,
for all its great darkness lit by lurid flames of martyrdom
and its " garments rolled in blood," it was but an episode,

[1] *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), II. i. 371.

religiously, when all is said. It was an explosion which, with noise and fury and temporary outburst of destructive forces, did its worst and died away. Permanent effect upon the country's history it had little or none ; and such effect as it had was by way of making any repetition of itself an impossible thing. Though for a brief space the reaction drew the land away from the Protestantism which had gone before, it really, in the end, thrust the land back in redoubled ardour upon Protestantism again. Just because the victory of Catholicism was for the moment so complete did Catholicism doom itself in England to lasting failure : men had seen the grim look upon its countenance, felt the choking grip of its relentless hands, realised that what resulted from its fierce wielding of its weapons could be nothing but a desolated and ravaged world—and had resolved that these things should not be. Showing itself as it was, Catholicism roused a defiant strength greater than its own, and compassed its own fall. As an episode, then, we may take Mary's reign—an episode significant indeed for the student, inasmuch as it served, in its brief happening, to show the utter incompatibility of the Roman Catholic religion with the temper of the English race—but an episode and no more.

The facts which serve as an index to the general character of the period are—at least the most outstanding of them—within the knowledge of all. How the entire ecclesiastical legislation of Edward's reign was reversed ; how the old heresy laws were revived, and enforced with increasing persistency and rigour up to Mary's death ; how secret congregations of Protestants, up and down the country, defied the new enactments and the danger of discovery ; [1] how martyrs of great name, such as Hooper, Latimer, and Ridley, suffered degradation and death for the Protestant faith ; how a host of less-known men and women, to the number of at least four hundred, went heavenward in chariots of fire while Mary sat on the throne ; how Cranmer, strangely mixed of weakness and strength as he had been through his life, showed the same mingling of qualities in

[1] Typical instances in London are mentioned by Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (ed. 1822), III. i. 411, and III. ii. 45.

the final trial, and, having recanted and re-recanted more than once, drew himself up to the full height of his moral stature at the close and went to the stake as if to his bridal, using his last breath in witness to the reformed religion, so making a supreme atonement for the vacillations of the past [1]—the tale is familiar enough. And they who have once come into close contact with the facts are not likely to forget.

But what has to be noticed here is this—that just as it was religion which had been in the main responsible for the changes of Edward's reign, so it was religion which was responsible for the reaction of the succeeding one. Mary, beyond doubt, was moved by religious zeal, and by nothing else. That she was possessed by ardent devotion to the Roman Catholic cause cannot be questioned : that, cruel as she was, the mere love of cruelty was not the driving power behind her persecutions, is evident, although it is perhaps little wonder—when one remembers what a riotous carnival of bloodshed seems to confront the historian, for the dazzling of his eyes and the heating of his soul to indignation, as he looks back—that the matter should frequently have been taken so. If one looks for testimony to the depth and self-abandonment of her religion, one needs not to look far. Mary herself had contended for the faith as she knew it when the contending was by no means free from danger : she had, when in Edward's time the tide of reform was filling quickly up to flood, insisted on observing Catholic rites in her own house ; and though Somerset, himself caring for none of these things, had yielded her permission without much demur, yet under Northumberland it had been against constant pressure and threatening that Mary had maintained her resolve. After she came to the throne, and before the actual and formal restoration of the realm to peace with the Pope, the title of " Supreme Head of the Church," which of course descended upon her with the crown, troubled her conscience greatly,[2] because her wearing of it seemed to

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[1] Collier observes, " He seemed to repel the force of the fire and to overlook the torture, by strength of thought " (*Ecclesiastical History*, ed. Lathbury, vi. 143). Mr. Gladstone counted this sentence of Collier's " one of the grandest in English prose " (Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, iii. 467).

[2] Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), vi. 31, 32.

imply that she was taking something of his due honour from the Vicar of Christ. Her one passion, in fact, was the Catholic faith, and for its re-establishment she was prepared to go to the uttermost lengths. Indeed, her acts were not her own, but the acts of the Catholic faith through her— which, of course, gives all the greater significance to the events of her reign. In all probability Mary was not inclined to persecution at first. And on this question of Mary's cruelty it ought in fairness to be said that something by way of extenuation may be pleaded. It was only by a happy, but almost accidental, conjunction of circumstances that she had obtained her sovereignty : she had before her accession been surrounded, and after her accession was still surrounded, by plots in which some of the extreme Protestants certainly played a part ;[1] and Cranmer himself, though it was as a heretic that he ultimately suffered, was already under sentence of death on account of the signature he had affixed to the instrument whereby Edward—acting under the dominance of Northumberland's stronger personality— had illegally, and in defiance of his father's will, sought to exclude his sister from the throne.[2] There is nothing surprising about any sternly self‑protective or punitive measures that Mary may have thought it well to take. But, as previously said, it is probable that at first she had little inclination to be severe. The foreign congregations which have been spoken of as established at Austin Friars and Glastonbury were permitted, at the beginning of the reign, to withdraw from England in peace.[3] And even the conspirators against Mary's succession were treated with comparative leniency, only a few suffering the extreme penalty they had incurred.[4] But Mary, being set upon the re-establishment of Catholicism, had to pay the price ; and whether she herself wished it or no, had to take the measures which the spirit and the authorities of Catholicism prescribed. Gardiner, who became Lord High Chancellor, was not likely to lean to mercy's side, if only for the reason that he had his own past errors to purge, and must prove, by the fervency

[1] Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), vi. chaps. xxx. and xxxi.
[2] For Cranmer's share in this, see Strype's *Life of Cranmer*, i. 424-426.
[3] Dixon, *History of The Church of England*, iv. 42, 46.
[4] Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), vi. 47 ff.

of his present zeal, that the doctrine of the *De vera
obedientia* was repented of and thrust aside.[1]   Pole, who
was appointed by the Pope to the position of Legate, from
the beginning—before he reached the country—strenuously
and incessantly advocated measures of swift thoroughness for
the country's cleansing, and chid Mary if she seemed to hang
back.[2]   It was through these men that Catholicism spoke
its will : it was into the hands of these men that Mary
found herself thrown by her Catholic zeal : it was the will
of these men that Mary was to do.   Given her devotion to
Catholicism, and the rest followed—for this *was* Catholicism,
its spirit, its inevitable programme, its inner and essential
nature revealed.   It is precisely because Mary was a
Catholic fanatic, and nothing else—precisely because she
had one aim, the reconciliation of England with Rome, and
no other—that the lesson of her reign is so terribly clear.
She may have blundered as to the best means of attaining
her aim.   Perhaps one writer,[3] who holds that she had no
business ability, and that " the restoration of England to the
Catholic faith, her one great object, took place . . . in spite
of her interference and that of her friends," is not far wrong.
Certainly Mary's marriage with Philip of Spain alienated
her subjects in the end, since it seemed to make their
country a mere counter in Spain's game.   And circumstances
were in other ways unkind.   When Spain and France came
to war, and the Pope was on the side of France, there was
a threatened withdrawal of Pole, the Pope's representative
from England, since England was looked upon as closely
bound to Spain ;[4] so that it was in face of the Pope's
displeasure falling, though undeservedly, upon her because
it fell upon her husband and his realm, that Mary had to
prove her devotion to the Pope himself ; and still severer
measures against the heretics naturally suggested themselves
as the line on which the proof might be given.   But what-
ever may have been Mary's mistakes, and however
circumstances may have increased her difficulties, mistakes

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[1] See *supra*, p. 115 note.

[2] Dixon, *History of The Church of England*, iv. 99, 104, 105, etc.

[3] Paul Friedemann, *Some New Facts in the History of Queen Mary*
(*Macmillan's Magazine*, xix. 7).

[4] Froude, *History of England* (ed. 1870), vi. 477, 478.

and circumstances did but serve to widen the stage, as it were, for Catholicism to play its part and to show the thing it was. Throughout we see Mary as Catholicism made her ; or, to borrow a phrase employed before, what we see expressed in Mary's reign—all the more perfectly and significantly if Mary was not herself inclined to persecution and if circumstances pressed her—is the Catholic religion's mind and will. Mary's reign makes the second part (Edward's reign being the first) of that " parenthetical " period in which, the absolute predominance of the secular element over the religious in their association being for the time relaxed, the decisive competition between the two religions was carried through with practically a clear field for each, so that each could show itself as it was. For England, Mary's reign was a lesson in the contents of Catholicism's inmost heart.

The lesson was bitter—so bitter that, had not death come to Mary when it did, revolution instead of death might easily have snatched her from her throne. It was in deepening darkness and disappointment that her days closed : she had taught and enforced her lesson too well. And England, having learnt the lesson, not only reversed Mary's reversal of the Protestant settlement, so causing her reign with all its black records to be but an episode in the country's religious history, but, for the sake of safety and to prevent any repetition of such schooling, let religion slip under the dominance of the secular element once more. Erastianism [1] came back, and came back clothed with greater power, by reason of what men had gone through. To have Protestantism established, guaranteed, codified, solidified, and as it were driven into the very fibre and substance of the nation's organic constitution, by the might of the State, under Elizabeth, must have been, to those who remembered, like the surprising but welcome coming of sudden rest after storm.

But it was precisely this re-established supremacy of

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[1] The name " Erastianism " has come to be generally used—and is so used here—for any system which gives the State supremacy over the Church in whatever degree. But Erastus did not write his book till 1568 : it was not published till 1589, after his death ; and Erastus really contended for the taking away of *all* autonomy from the Church. The usage is therefore somewhat loose.

organisation, and of organisation engineered from the political standpoint, that made the protest of the Nonconformist spirit necessary and inevitable once more.   And we may at this point, before passing on to notice the making of the protest, summarise what has gone before—take one rapid flight over the course we have more slowly traversed. How has it been faring with the Nonconformist spirit through these centuries which our survey has covered ?   How and when and at what gates has it presented itself as ready to come in ?   How has the march of events affected its work ? We started from Wicliffism, finding therein a sudden and complete assertion of the Nonconformist principle.   It was a full-orbed sun, a sun at its noon, that the sudden parting of the fourteenth-century clouds revealed.   But at once the clouds closed up again ; and Wicliffism thereafter shed only a feeble light.   Dr. Gairdner, indeed, asserts that the Reformation, as initiated by Henry the Eighth and subsequently carried through, was on Lollard lines, and embodied the Lollard ideas.[1]   But this is only true if we take Lollardy as meaning the unsystematised protest against Catholic abuses into which Wicliffism dropped after Wiclif's death :[2] of Wicliffism as Wiclif himself declared it (and it is to this that Dr. Gairdner refers) the statement will not stand. Wicliffism, indeed, represents the first of those " might-have-beens " of which, in respect of the Nonconformist spirit, the story of these centuries is full.   For it is with " might-have-beens," and with changes which, just because they were in themselves so good, made the task of the Nonconformist spirit more arduous, that we constantly meet.   Next after the " might-have-been " of Wicliffism came, in Henry's reign, the " might-have-been " of the Revival of Learning, which on its religious side held the promise and possibility of realising the Nonconformist spirit's ideal.   Promise and possibility went unfulfilled ; and instead of their fulfilment, England experienced the ecclesiastical changes inspired by Henry's arrogant self-will.   They were changes which the Nonconformist spirit would itself have demanded, and which therefore (having been wrought apart from the Nonconformist

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[1] *Lollardy and the Reformation*, ii. 478.
[2] See *supra*, section on " The Later Lollardy."

spirit) helped to make the subsequent appearance of the
Nonconformist spirit seem an impertinent and superfluous
intrusion to the superficial eye.   They were, moreover, as if
that were not enough, changes quite unreligiously motived,
so that whatever diminution of the disadvantage just
mentioned might have been brought about by a religious
motive working behind them was lost, and the Nonconformist
spirit, besides being made to appear in measure superfluous,
found but a partial religious sensitiveness to which it could
appeal with hope of favourable response.   That is another
" might-have-been " ; for had it been a definitely Protestant
impulse that created the first Protestant changes in the
religion of the land, the historian might, so far as Noncon-
formity is concerned, have had a different tale to tell.   Non-
conformity might, at its coming, have been less harshly
frowned upon—perhaps even welcomed, if not with readiness,
with respect.   Passing to Edward's time, we find the earlier
changes developed and carried further—being still changes
for which the Nonconformist spirit would have called, but
being still, also, changes effected apart from the Noncon-
formist spirit, and being still, consequently, changes which
added something to the difficulty of Nonconformity's future
work.   Yet under Edward ecclesiastical development and
reform were far more religiously motived than they had been
under Henry ; for under Edward the religious element was
predominant over the secular in that association of the two
whereby development and reform were secured.   Had that
predominance continued, the Nonconformist spirit would
have found a keener religious atmosphere in which to do its
work ; and some consciousness of worth in it would have
mixed with men's mood of resistance to its claims.   But
that, too, passes into the category of " might - have - beens."
For the misery of the Catholic reaction (a religiously-motived
reaction) in Mary's reign spoilt the chance : England, for the
guardianship of its Protestantism against Catholic dangers,
set the secular element predominant over the religious once
more ; and it was under the predominance of the secular
element that the final organisation of English religion was
performed.   And against the Nonconformist spirit, waiting
outside the circle of events, the doors were as closely barred

as ever, at the perfection of a Reformation which resolved religion as much as ever into organisation, and which put the religious organisation as much as ever, indeed more than ever, into other control than religion's own.

All this we have seen.   The whole movement of events (and this is, one might say, the irony of the thing) both called for the Nonconformist spirit and resisted it, made its appearance the more necessary and piled up obstacle on obstacle in its path.   But the Nonconformist spirit, spite of the obstacles, answered to the call.   After Wicliffism, it drooped through long years ; but it still sought its opportunities, and pressed in here and there from beyond the barriers of the stage whereon the chief actors in the religious drama played their part.   Then, as organisation hardened under Edward, it spoke through Hooper's contention for ecclesiastical simplicity and, still more plainly, through the humble "sectaries" of Essex and Kent.   And then, under Elizabeth, with organisation practically crystallised to final shape—when surely it was time for the Nonconformist spirit to speak more definitely still—when, if the difficulty of the Nonconformist protest was perhaps at its climax, the necessity for the Nonconformist protest was surely at its climax too—then, with the rise of the Independents, the louder and more definite protest came.

BOOK II

THE CHILDHOOD OF NONCONFORMITY

CHAPTER I

NONCONFORMIST BEGINNINGS

SECTION 1

The Elizabethan Settlement

AUTHORITIES.—The general history of the reign may be studied in Stow's *Annals*, Camden's *Life of Elizabeth*, Hallam's *Constitutional History*, and the modern account of Froude. On the ecclesiastical side, see Strype's *Annals of the Reformation* and his *Life of Parker*, with the *Church Histories* of Fuller and Collier. Dixon's *History of the Church of England*, which closes at 1570, is invaluable so far as it goes. Frere's *History of the English Church in the Reigns of Elizabeth and James the First* covers the ground in much detail. The most important documents are given in Cardwell's *Documentary Annals of the Re formed Church of England*.

IT was in Elizabeth's reign that the permanent settlement of the Church of England was reached—the settlement which, with comparatively small modifications, endures to-day ; and it was in Elizabeth's reign that concrete, systematic, organised, what may be termed self-conscious, Nonconformity began. In order to understand Nonconformity, we need to understand the ecclesiastical construction against which it measured itself, the system against which, as boundaries were fixed and rigid lines laid down, it lifted its protesting voice ; and the outstanding features in the development of Elizabeth's religious policy must therefore be passed under brief review.

As has already been stated, we have travelled, when we come into Elizabeth's reign, out of that " parenthesis " which the reigns of Edward the Sixth and Mary, linked together, may be said to form. The changes of those two reigns, whether the movement of change was in the Protestant or the Catholic direction, were much more religiously motived than previous changes had been or than subsequent changes were to be. Just as the breach with Rome to which Henry

the Eighth committed himself and his country had practically
no religious or Protestant impulse behind it, so the mould
into which Elizabeth ran the Church arrangements of her
time was religious only in form, and Protestant only by a
sort of chance.   The Queen's primary consideration was the
safety of her throne.   To this aim she was, naturally enough,
constant throughout ; and whatever changefulness she dis-
played arose from the fact that in this she did not change.[1]
The unchanged purpose called for changed methods
over and over again.   So far as Elizabeth had any religious
conviction, it did indeed lean to the Protestant side ; but for
any opinions she entertained " conviction " was really far too
strong a term ; and her Protestant inclination was assuredly
not commanding enough to make her risk the dangers
involved in a very decided favouring of the Protestant cause.
She had conformed to the Catholic faith—at any rate to the
Catholic form of worship—in her sister's reign ; and Edward
Dering, one of the Presbyterially-inclined clergy, roundly
told her from the pulpit that at that time her motto had
been " Tanquam ovis," or " like a sheep." [2]   It is true that her
final settlement of the Church was a distinctively Protestant
one ; but this was simply because she saw that the sentiment
of the nation as a whole would have it so, and that it was
consequently by a distinctively Protestant settlement she
would gain most in the way of consolidating her position
and making her defences sure.   It was one of Elizabeth's
habits, when circumstances seemed about to force a certain
line of policy upon her, to bring it forward and push it as if
it were the one thing in all the world that she had most
desired.   But at the outset she had to reckon with the fact
that no small number of her people (how many she could
but wait for events to reveal) were Roman Catholics still,
and with the other perhaps more important fact that she
herself, being the child of that Anne Boleyn in whose favour
Catherine of Aragon had been divorced by Henry, would
find the Pope and all the Catholic sovereigns of Europe
hotly incensed at her accession to the English throne.

[1] See on this *British Quarterly Review*, xlv. 12, 13.
[2] Fuller, *Church History* (ed. Brewer), iv. 399.   Dering added, in reference
to Elizabeth's persecution of himself and his friends, that the Queen's motto had
become " Tanquam indomita juvenca," or " like an untamed heifer."

The dangers of the situation might be somewhat minimised by avoiding too open a challenge to the Catholic faith, and would certainly be aggravated if such a challenge were allowed to sound ; and it was under the dominance of such considerations as these that Elizabeth took her earliest steps. The whole thing was a question of policy throughout.   It has also to be remembered (and this is perhaps even more important for our present study) that in Elizabeth there dwelt a love of order which was a passion, a sort of meticulous exactness which could not endure frayed edges or loose ends. Anything like unfinishedness or unsettled effervescence, in the Church as elsewhere, was an offence in her eyes.   Perhaps, indeed, this dislike was but one manifestation of the political instinct, since disorder of religious or any other kind might easily in the existing conditions become a menace to the stability of the throne ; at any rate the two instincts, if they were two, would make an easy alliance at sight ; so that policy and love of order alike would urge the Queen to the quickest and surest ecclesiastical settlement that could be attained.   What we see, therefore, through the years ranging from 1558 to 1571 (which may be named as the years during which Elizabeth's settlement took shape), is the instinct of policy and the instinct of order driving the ecclesiastical system into hardness of substance and rigidity of outline, and into an immobility which permitted neither any further change within nor any toleration of alien religious methods without.   For the desired end could not be gained in the twinkling of an eye.   It was not at one stroke, as the Queen herself, in the interests of both policy and order, would undoubtedly have desired, that the final settlement was reached : it was found, as Elizabeth pushed the system into the appointed shape at one point, that it protruded at another point and so called for further manipulation still : compromise turned out to be not so easy as had been anticipated ; and that desire for safety and order—which had at first sought to realise itself simply by steering a middle course—had to realise itself by calling in the aid of compulsion against forces which would not voluntarily yield.   For the mere desire after quietude must always face the possibility, in a world of unquiet men, that it may only be able to win

satisfaction through the very activity it dislikes, and that one exercise of activity may make a second inevitable in its turn. This is, in effect, what happened. The finally chosen course had to be to one side of the middle line ; and as for order and quietude, Elizabeth was driven at last to take measures which, if they had brought about the order and quietude she desired, could only have done so by making a desert and calling it peace. But the essential point for memory is this. The guiding and inspiring idea of Elizabeth's ecclesiastical policy was really to settle religious affairs in such a fashion that they should count as living and burning interests no more. They were to be settled, in brief, by being made " faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null." [1]

If this be borne in mind, the stages through which the hardening process passed, the successive adjustments by which Elizabeth endeavoured to realise her ideal (always remembering that she considered every issue, not upon its merits, but in its relation to that security and order which she held so dear) [2] may be rapidly retailed. Of the conflicts by which the process of settlement was accompanied, we shall speak later : for the moment we stand as it were at Elizabeth's side, see with her eyes, follow the movements of her hand. It was one of the first necessities of the situation that Mary's Council should be superseded ; for whatever else might be uncertain, it was certain that the nation had sickened of Mary's rule and of the men who aided and abetted Mary's fiery zeal. New men, therefore, took their places at the Council seats, although a few of those in possession were allowed to stay ; and Sir William Cecil, a statesman of the large and massive type, became principal Secretary of State. Realising the need for a definite settlement of the religious troubles of the land, the Council appointed a Commission to revise the second Prayer Book of Edward the Sixth, and issued a proclamation concerning the procedure to be adopted pending the time when the Commission's labours should be done. In this proclamation the programme followed in the Queen's private chapel was

[1] Tennyson's *Maud.*

[2] For instance, while combating Presbyterianism at home, the Queen established it (in 1576) as the official Church of the Channel Islands. See Drysdale, *History of the Presbyterians in England*, pp. 164-174.

held up as a model for all to copy—which meant (as was, indeed, explicitly stated) that the existing order of service was for the present to be preserved, save that for the Gospel and Epistles, the Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Litany and the Creed, the English tongue might be used.[1] And a paper of recommendations as to the future (called the " Device for alteration of religion "), possibly drawn up by Cecil, seemed to look to an ultimate perpetuation of something like what was thus temporarily prescribed.[2] To make Elizabeth's order of service in her own chapel the pattern for the whole country was scarcely to give a very definite indication of what the Queen, if she were pressed, would ultimately decide ; for more than once—by quitting the building before the conclusion of the service, or by forbidding the elevation of the Host—she seemed to show that the whole thing was tolerated rather than liked. Roman Catholics would note also that when the Bishops met the new Queen at Highgate on her way from Hatfield to town, Elizabeth had refused to Bonner, who had in the preceding reign been the most zealous Catholic champion of them all, the favour of kissing her hand.[3] But if Catholics could feel little more than a hope that struggled painfully for breath, the Protestants on their side might well be uncertain what shape religion would finally wear when it emerged from its transition hour ; for Catholicism seemed to be at least winning some recognition of prescriptive rights All this indecisiveness was doubtless entirely in accord with Elizabeth's own mind : had it been possible to make this *interim* arrangement the established rule, and so to keep both Catholicism and Protestantism quiet by giving decided preponderance to neither, it would have well suited Elizabeth's inclination so far as we can read it ; and the Queen, we may take it, would have " inclined," in regard to the relation between the two religions as a whole, as Burnet tells us she " inclined " on the single question of transubstantiation. She " inclined," he says, " to have the manner of Christ's presence in the Sacrament left in some general words : that those who

[1] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), I. ii. 391, 392.
[2] *Ibid.* I. ii. 392-398, or Gee, *Elizabethan Prayer Book and Ornaments*, pp. 195-202.
[3] Stow's *Annals*, p. 634.

believed the corporal presence might not be driven away
from the Church by too nice an explanation of it."[1]   It was
the obvious policy for a Queen who wanted to drug the
religious problem rather than to settle it.   By some such
temporising as this the policy of "safety and order" would
most quickly and easily be fulfilled.

But it was evident from the outset that not in this way
could the desired quietude and order be secured.   Indeed,
however the Queen may have "inclined" to the temporising
line of action alluded to, she cannot have had more than a
trembling hope that it would ever meet with success.   That
trouble was foreseen, as also that Elizabeth's advisers
(rightly reading the Queen's mind, and in reality submissively
receiving suggestion instead of giving it) contemplated
obtaining the desired order by the exercise of compulsion
should it be necessary so to do, is clear from the fact that
the "recommendations" already alluded to include one for
the stern suppression of all unauthorised religious gatherings.
The suggestion was prophetic of the policy which Elizabeth,
governed by such ideals and purposes as hers, was afterwards
compelled to push forward with firmer and firmer hand.
For, as might be expected, neither the Romanists nor the
Protestants were content to leave affairs in a condition so
undefined.   That the Romanists were thoroughly determined
not to yield an inch of ground which under Mary they had
won, had already been proved by the sermon which Bishop
White of Winchester preached at Mary's funeral, of which
the text was, "I praise the dead more than the living," and
in which, with no ambiguity of intention, though in outwardly
respectful terms, the preacher depreciated the new Queen
and hinted that for the true faith there were troublous times
in store.[2]   Clearly there was to be resistance to any retreat
from the most advanced Romanist line.   On the other hand,
the extreme Protestants, a great many of whom returned
from abroad at Elizabeth's accession, soon showed that they,
too, intended to assert their claims : the "gospellers," as the
more fanatical Protestant preachers were called, began

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[1] *History of the Reformation* (ed. Pocock), ii. 598.
[2] For lengthy extracts from the sermon, see Dodd's *Church History* (ed. Tierney), ii. Appendix 32.

openly to appear and to inflame the ever-ready crowds ; and
on Christmas Day (1558) a mob broke into the Church of
Austin Friars—which had been, as we saw, the meeting-place
of a foreign Protestant congregation in Edward's time,[1] and
had become the home of the Italian Catholics during Mary's
reign—passing on to a similar profanation of the French
Church later in the day.[2] There were signs enough that, if
a decorous subsidence of all disputation, and the trimming
down to one set pattern of all religious practice, were the
desired ends, they could only be reached by the putting
forth of a strong hand with an unbending will behind it.
This was no soft and pliable clay on which Elizabeth and
her counsellors had to work : here was rather, one might say,
a moving, heaving, storm-driven sea whose waters they had
somehow to bring down to calm.

But the strong hand and the unbending will were there.
And within four years (as is shown by the second Act of
Supremacy passed in 1563) the brain behind them had
realised, and had risen to, the necessity of stopping at
nothing in order that outward uniformity might be secured.
This, however, is to anticipate, and for the moment we must
go back.   From the beginning of the reign, Parliament,
Convocation, and the Queen dealt with point after point,
Parliament and Convocation sometimes seconding and some-
times anticipating, occasionally even temporarily out-running,
the Queen's desires, but all together stiffening into more
marked hardness of attitude, growing more impatient of the
smallest movement of recalcitrancy, as time went on.   The
colourless compromise with which Elizabeth had at first
hoped all parties would be content was unworkable, and
Queen and Parliament rose to the call.   The first act of the
Parliament of 1559 was formally to return into Elizabeth's
hands the weapon which Mary had surrendered to the Pope,
by restoring the Royal Supremacy.[3]   It is true that after

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[1] *Supra*, p. 138.

[2] The account of the Spanish Ambassador is in *Calendar of State Papers*,
preserved principally in the Archives of Simancas, i. 16, 17.   The Venetian
Ambassador's account is in *Calendar of State Papers* (Venetian Series), vii. 2.

[3] Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), vi. 214-216.   See also *English
Historical Review*, xviii. 517-528, for a discussion by Professor F. W. Maitland of
some of the difficulties connected with the passing of the Act.

many disputes, and after many objections on the part of the
Bishops—who had of course received their appointments in
Mary's time—the title adopted for the Queen was that of
" Supreme Governor " instead of " Supreme Head " : it is also
true that in one of the " Injunctions " of this same year there
was given an explanation of the position which implied that
in using the title " Governor " Elizabeth was only shutting
out " foreign powers " (by which phrase of course the Pope
is meant), and not arrogating to herself any final authority
in spiritual affairs ;[1] but neither the modification of title nor
the attempt at watering down its significance can, in the
lights of the facts, be taken to mean very much.[2]   Other
measures, of this same year and subsequent years, show
clearly enough that the title of " Governor " really implied,
and was meant to imply, the power and right to order
everything religious down to the slightest detail ; or, at least,
that if there were any reserves behind the title, they were
held only tentatively, and with a suspicion that they would
soon have to yield.   How strictly the " Governorship " was
really interpreted, and how full its powers were intended to
be, the Act clearly shows in that it permits the Queen to
commission whomever she may think fit for the correction
of all heresies and abuses in the land—so originating that
Court of High Commission which played so important a
part in the religious history of the reign, and which was to
be so sharp a thorn in the side of every Nonconformist
both within and without the Church.   Whatever the
prescribed title might chance to be, Royal Supremacy had as
a matter of fact come back with all the autocratic power
that even Henry the Eighth, in calling himself Head of the
Church, had ever claimed.   Close upon the Act of Supremacy
followed the Act of Uniformity,[3] re-establishing the second
Prayer Book and the English Service of Edward the Sixth

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[1] Besides the references for the whole body of "Injunctions" as given
below, see a note on this particular one in Hallam's *Constitutional History*
(ed. 1854), i. 112.

[2] F. Makower, the German writer who so thoroughly investigated the
constitutional history of the English Church, remarks that Elizabeth " revived by
statute the supremacy to the extent practically in which it had existed under
Henry the Eighth and Edward the Sixth " (*The Constitutional History and
Constitution of the Church of England*, English Translation, p. 254).

[3] Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), vi. 224.

which, as we have seen, a Commission had been appointed
to revise,[1] and subjecting to fine even the layman who did
not attend the worship of the authorised Church ; and it
is worthy of note, as indicating the forward look which
Elizabeth and her advisers were stretching towards possible
disobediences, that power was given to the Queen, " If there
shall happen any contempt or irreverence to be used in the
ceremonies or rites of the Church . . . to ordain and publish
such further ceremonies or rites as may be most for the
advancement of God's glory, the edifying of His Church and
the due reverence of Christ's holy mysteries and sacraments."
The " Injunctions " just now referred to—which were borne
through England by a " Visitation," consisting in each
different district of the Lord-lieutenant of the county and
other gentlemen, with legal and theological experts, the
Visitors being empowered both to enquire into the present
religious condition and to settle the future religious line—
dealt with such matters as images, the dress and marriages
of the clergy, ecclesiastical ornaments, the musical part of the
service, and other points on which the Act of Uniformity
had given no direct or conclusive voice.[2] In fact, it was
abundantly evident that the entire ecclesiastical and religious
arrangements of the land were to be ordered under a
discipline which might be termed of strictest military type,
that Elizabeth meant to be a kind of religious Commander-
in-Chief with both clergy and laity as members of the
regiments which must drill and deploy at any signal she
chose to raise, and that there was to be for this army of hers
a universal conscription from which no exemptions could be
allowed. Elizabeth's purpose, her passion, her ideal, were
becoming clear, defining themselves more plainly to any
observer (perhaps even to Elizabeth herself) as circumstances
pushed roughly up against them and stirred them to protest
and action. The Act of Supremacy and the Act of
Uniformity—though the strictness of some of their provisions
might appear to be contradictory of the indecisivensss and of
the readiness for compromise which Elizabeth had shown for

[1] *Supra*, p. 156.
[2] For the Visitation and Injunctions, consult Gee's *Elizabethan Clergy*, chaps.
iii.-vi. The Injunctions are also given in Wilkins' *Concilia*, iv. 182-189, and in
Somers Tracts (ed. Scott), i. 64-75.

a little while—formed in reality a consistent development of the policy whereby that indecisiveness and that readiness for compromise had been inspired ; for, all through, the dominant desire was a desire for quietude and order and for the political safety which quietude and order would help to secure, the dominant determination a determination that the religious problem should be put to sleep.   But the hand which, in order that the demon of disquiet might not be roused, had exerted only a gentle pressure at first, closed upon the situation with firmer fingers now, since the demon of disquiet had awakened after all.   And this, it should be understood, was by no means a merely general power which the Queen was asserting for herself and with which Parliament was arming her.   As the " Injunctions " and the " Visitation " showed, the eyes of authority were going to be in every place, and the whole life of the nation, on its religious side, was to be cut to one regulation pattern and organised according to one unbending rule.

All the subsequent proceedings in connection with the Elizabethan settlement may be taken as the logical consequences, or rather the lineal descendants, of the Acts already named.   Given the policy by which these were inspired, the remaining procedures were bound to come.   The bulk of the clergy made little scruple as to at any rate a nominal acceptance of the new order of things, many of them having probably fallen into Mary's Catholic system with a reluctance which now became a welcome for its overturn, and many of the rest perhaps not being sure to what extent obedience would really be enforced.[1]   So compliant, in fact, did the mass of the clergy prove, that they actually outran the Queen's commands, and though June the 24th was the appointed date for the introduction of the new service book, Parkhurst could write to Bullinger in May that it was already in general use.[2]   But the Bishops, who were episcopally of

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[1] There has been considerable discussion as to the precise number of clergy who refused to conform.   The usual estimate is about two hundred out of a total of nine thousand four hundred, though Roman Catholic writers reach a larger result.   The matter is exhaustively discussed by Dr. Gee, *Elizabethan Clergy*, chap. xii.

[2] *Zurich Letters*, edited for the Parker Society by Rev. Hastings Robinson, D.D., i. 29.

Mary's creation (for the most part),[1] and of course religiously
of Mary's mind, were of sterner stuff.   Summoned in May
to an audience of the Queen in order that they might take
the oath which the Act of Supremacy prescribed, they all,
with the single exception of Kitchen of Llandaff, refused,
maintaining the refusal even after time for reconsideration
had passed, and suffering the deprivation of their sees rather
than give way.[2]   The See of Canterbury was already vacant,
as Cardinal Pole had died a day or two after Mary ; so that,
with Parker appointed to the Archbishopric, and with the
opportunity open to her of filling all the other bishoprics as
she would, Elizabeth might well feel herself sure of a sub-
servient episcopal bench.   It proved entirely willing, on the
whole, to be an instrument in Elizabeth's hands.   It is true
that the bishops were not always of one mind.   In the
thought of two or three there was a faint colouring of that
Puritanism which was doomed to fail.   But it counted for
little, and hardly at all affected the course of events.   It is
also true that now and then certain misunderstandings came
between the Queen and the Bishops whom she had created
to carry out her will : it was not until 1571 (the date we
have taken as marking the consummation of the Elizabethan
" settlement ") that all friction disappeared from the working
of the machine ; but whatever misunderstandings existed
were simply due to the fact that Elizabeth, with all her
passionate desire for " discipline " and order, did not realise
the difficulties in the way of obtaining them, and accordingly
chid her servants, sometimes for doing too little, sometimes
for doing too much.   If differences occasionally arose as to
details of method, differences as to principle or as to the
final result to be wrought out there were none ; and the
episcopal bench (though as to a few of its members some
qualification of the statement is necessary)[3] was as firmly set

[1] Four of them dated from Henry's time, and had forsworn the supremacy of
the Pope with the King, only to accept it again at Mary's command.

[2] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), I. i. 204-206.   The extreme
Roman Catholic view of the incident—a quite unsuccessful attempt being made
to prove that the Bishops were treated with unnecessarily oppressive rigour—may
be found in *Queen Elizabeth and the Catholic Hierarchy*, by T. E. Bridgett and
T. F. Knox.

[3] See, for instance, *Parker Correspondence*, p. 149, for a complaint made by
Cecil in 1561 as to slackness on the part of the Bishop of Norwich.

upon " discipline," and upon a universal observance of it, as the Queen herself. The Bishops, being in more immediate contact with the realities of the situation, and having the actual handling of them to do, saw necessities here, and objections there, which the Queen did not and perhaps could not see. On the one hand, the strengthening Protestant sentiment of the nation called for a more decided Protestant accent than that in which Elizabeth was at first prepared to speak, if things were really to settle down. Yet, on the other hand, the presence of the extreme Protestant reformers made the attainment of order, if all the more desirable in the eyes of those to whom order was well-nigh the best thing in all the world, all the more difficult too ; for if these reformers represented any order at all, it was an order which could only be reached at the other end of a revolution in which all possibility of order might be lost. It will presently be our task to note how through those years Nonconformity within the Church (and even the beginnings of Nonconformity without the Church) made itself felt against the " disciplining " inclinations of the Queen and her servants. All these things complicated the problem to an extent which the Queen may well have failed to realise at first, however it may have forced itself on her mind ere long. On the whole, however, spite of occasional jars, Queen and Bishops, with Parliament duly fulfilling its part, worked together towards one end ; and if disagreement arose, it quickly died again. We may therefore leave the year 1559, at which till now we have been detained, and briefly recapitulate the salient incidents up to 1571, when the last stone, so to say, was slipped into its place.

Somewhat curiously, it was the Queen herself with whom the Bishops had first of all to remonstrate in the interest of the policy which the Queen herself held dear. Having regard to the fact that the prevailing tendency of the people was distinctly Protestant—though perhaps it would be more correct to say that the people, as a whole, with the memories of Mary's reign hot within them, felt for Roman Catholicism a hatred much more positive in its character than was their love for Protestantism—and also to the fact that any licence given to Roman Catholicism made a danger-spot upon the

political map, it was advisable that Elizabeth's own private
services should take on a more markedly Protestant tone.
In the Queen's chapel the crucifix was still to be found :
sermons were frequently omitted from the programme ; and
the officiating clergy were required to minister in " the
golden vestments of the papacy." [1] For the moment the
controversy threatened to become acute ; but a line of
compromise was presently found, the crucifixes being taken
away while the vestments were retained.[2] The matter was,
in fact, one which was likely in the end to settle itself in
the sense the Bishops desired. Subsequent events would
naturally tend to weaken whatever reluctance Elizabeth may
have felt to an open detachment from Catholic form ; for it
became more and more evident that no temporising would
conciliate the Roman Catholic section of the community ;
and some of the deprived Roman Catholic bishops, compelled
to give up hope of restoration, began an agitation which
could only deepen the Queen's antagonism to their faith.
Also, although the Pope's Bull of deposition was not finally
launched until 1570, it was clear from the outset (as, indeed,
might have been expected) that by nothing less than
absolute submission could Rome be made content. Besides
sending more than one envoy into the country, Pius the
Fourth endeavoured to enlist the help of the Emperor
Ferdinand and of Philip of Spain in order to hold England
fast, and wrote to Elizabeth herself beseeching her to return
to the bosom of the Church and bring her nation with her.[3]
It lay in the nature of things—Elizabeth being what she
was—that the Queen should lean more and more decidedly
to the Protestant side. For the rest, we have but to note
what may with perfect justice be called successive turns
of the screw. The " Injunctions " had been promulgated.
But they were not by any means strictly observed ; and it
has been already hinted that the somewhat suspicious

[1] Sampson to Bullinger, *Zurich Letters*, edited for the Parker Society by
Rev. Hastings Robinson, D.D., i. 63.
[2] On the distinction between the "crucifix" and the "cross," which must be
recognised in a right understanding of the compromise, see R. W. Dixon, *History
of the Church of England*, v. 314.
[3] For the letter to Elizabeth, see Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lath-
bury), vi. 298. Abstracts of all three letters may be found in *Calendar of State
Papers* (Foreign Series, 1560-61, edited by J. Stevenson), pp. 42, 43.

readiness with which the clergy assented to the new order of
things may not have indicated the existence of a very real
spirit of obedience beneath.   At any rate, confusion pre-
vailed in not a few places, and every man did that which
was right in his own eyes.   By 1561 the matter had
become so urgent, and Elizabeth's anger at the disorder so
strong,[1] that Archbishop Parker, in conjunction with some
of his episcopal brethren, issued a list of " Interpretations
and Considerations," in which detailed instructions for the
practice of the clergy in regard to apparel, the position of
the communion table, and many other points, were duly set
out.   Coupled with the " Interpretations and Considerations "
were " Eleven Articles," in which some of the essential
doctrines of religion as the clergy were to hold and to preach
them were enunciated, and which were to be publicly con-
fessed by ministers at their first appointment to a living and
subsequently twice in every year.[2]   The hand of authority,
stretched out in the original " Injunctions," therefore pressed
a little more heavily now.   It pressed more heavily still, and
not upon the clergy alone, in an Act which was passed by
the Parliament of 1563 (which has been already alluded to[3]
as marking the final determination of the controlling mind
to stop at nothing in the reducing of all things to unvarying
rule)—the Second Supremacy Act—which not only re-enacted
the provisions of the first, and enlarged their scope in that
some who had not been called upon to take the oath before
were now required to do so, but gave power to the Bishops
to tender the said oath to any persons who might be
suspected of unwillingness to subscribe.[4]   How formidable
an instrument this was, and how important an event the
passing of this Act made, will at once be seen.   Undoubtedly
it was against the Romanists that it was primarily directed ;
but it shot its arrow with equal effect against all who might
be unable to admit the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Queen.

[1] Strype, *Life of Parker* (ed. 1821), i. 214, or *Parker Correspondence*, pp.
148, 149.
[2] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), i. 318-329.   Strype, however,
gives 1560 as the date.
[3] *Supra*, p. 159.
[4] The Act is entitled " An Act for the Assurance of the Queen's Royal Power
over all Estates and Subjects within her Dominions."   See Collier, *Ecclesiastical
History* (ed. Lathbury), vi. 348-350.

That Parker at first advised moderation in its use, or at least required Bishops to communicate with him before a second tendering of the oath to any person who had once refused it, only shows that Elizabeth and her Parliament were in advance of the Archbishop so far as sternness of resolution was concerned. Returning to the matter of clerical discipline, it has to be noted that not even the " Interpretations and Considerations " secured their desired end. It is at this point that the activity of the Puritan party within the Church becomes definite and pronounced ; and at this activity we shall presently, in another section, have to glance. That Puritanism to some extent tinged the opinions of one or two of the Bishops—although to an extent only slight— has previously been remarked ; and in the Convocation of 1563, Sandys of Worcester, without countenance from his episcopal brethren, though with considerable support from other sections of the clergy, endeavoured to render the services of the Church much more puritanical than the In-junctions and the Interpretations had left them.[1] The attempt was abortive. But the fact that it had been essayed did not tend to make the storms subside. In 1564, as is shown in a paper Cecil drew up,[2] things were much as they had been when Elizabeth first protested in 1561, if indeed they were not worse : rigid adherence to the prescribed service book, or the pursuit of an interpolating originality, was adopted at the clergyman's whim : clerical dress was varied according to taste and sometimes, even in the actual hours of worship, retained no distinctive clerical character at all : no one could tell, if he entered an unfamiliar church, where at any part of the service he would have to look to find the celebrant ; and so crying was the scandal that in the following year a sharp letter from the Queen bade Parker bring things to decency without any more ado or delay.[3] The hand of authority must fall once more. In obedience to the Queen's command, the Archbishop compiled a " Book of Articles," intending by its contents to settle all vexed questions of discipline, dress, and procedure, once for all, and sent it to Cecil for con-

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[1] Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), vi. 361, 362.
[2] Strype, *Life of Parker* (ed. 1821), i. 301, 302.
[3] *Parker Correspondence*, pp. 223-227.

sideration,[1] asking thereafter—when Cecil had expressed his
general approval—that the Queen should authorise its issue
and so give to it the force of statute law.[2]   Simultaneously
Parker commenced that severer pressure on the Puritans [3]
(the ferment of Nonconformity was steadily mounting all the
while, and besides showing itself within the Church was just
about to show itself pronouncedly without) which continued
without intermission, from his hands or from those of others,
to the end of Elizabeth's reign and beyond.   He was dis-
appointed, however, if he supposed that he had met the
Queen's desires.   The compiling of the " Book of Articles "
failed quite satisfactorily to solve the difficulties of the
situation ; for Elizabeth, though resolved on the suppression
of all irregularity, held that it was the business of the
Bishops, not her business, to attend to such things as these ;
and while insisting that Parker must secure order at all costs,
and while blaming him with Elizabethan vehemence for not
doing so, she refused, by withholding her authorisation of
the " Articles," to put into the Archbishop's hands the only
weapon which, as he thought, would make victory absolutely
secure.   Since she persisted in her refusal in face of all
remonstrance—and remonstrance was made more than once
—Parker had to do what he could.   In 1566 he issued the
" Book of Articles," not under its first title, but as a " Book
of Advertisements partly for the due order in the public
administration of common prayers and using the holy
sacraments, and partly for the apparel of all persons
ecclesiastical." [4]   It did not by any means succeed, as we
shall see, in beating down all opposition or in bringing about
the uncoloured uniformity which Elizabeth and Parker alike
desired ; but it was in line with all the measures which had
previously been taken, and constituted, in terms of a metaphor
already employed, the last turn of the screw.   The Acts of
Supremacy, the Act of Uniformity, the " Injunctions," the
" Interpretations and Considerations," the establishment of

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[1] *Parker Correspondence*, pp. 233, 234.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 234, 235.   [3] *Infra*, p. 224.

[4] The " Advertisements " are given in Wilkin's *Concilia*, iv. 247-250, and in
Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England*, i. 287-297.
Both these, however, date them wrongly, as do historians like Collier and
Strype.

the High Commission Court, and now the "Advertisements," made a formidable armoury by which, on the side of "discipline," anything like mutiny in the ecclesiastical army —indeed, anything like unwillingness to join it—was to be prevented, or punished if it occurred.

On the side of doctrine, the final issue was not reached till a few years later. We have already noted the "Eleven Articles," which accompanied the "Interpretations and Considerations" of 1561.[1] But these could only be a temporary makeshift in so important an element of the Church's life. The question of doctrine was perhaps less immediately pressing than that of discipline, for on essential doctrinal points practically all parties were at this time agreed. But such a settlement as that which was desired must take guarantees for the future as well as satisfy the necessities of the present ; and only by the promulgation of a definite code of belief could this be done. In January of 1563 Convocation had taken in hand the revision of the forty-two articles of Edward the Sixth,[2] had reduced their number to thirty-nine, and had sought to win for its finished labours the Queen's assent. This was accorded after a year's delay, although from the ratified Articles the one numbered twenty-nine was left out. For doctrine, in fact, Elizabeth was comparatively little concerned : from her point of view it was, of course, a right instinct which warned her that to define doctrines was to open questions rather than close them, and that formulations might consequently accentuate disintegration and disorder instead of putting them down : there was, besides, her conviction that all these things were for the ecclesiastical authorities to manage without the secular arm, powerful as it might be behind the scenes, showing itself as wielding the sword of law ; and it is not surprising that an attempt, made by the Bishops in 1566, to secure subscription to the Articles by statute was foiled by the Queen's prohibition of the contemplated Bill in the House of Lords.[3] But by 1571 things had moved

[1] *Supra*, p. 166.
[2] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), I. i. 470 ff. But Strype gives the date as 1562.
[3] The Bill had passed its second reading in the Commons. See Dewes, *Journal of all the Parliaments of Elizabeth*, p. 132.

so far that, somewhat curiously, the Puritan party in the
Church and the Bishops were at one as to the necessity for
an enforcement of subscription—the Bishops in the interest
of order and uniformity of belief, and the Puritans in the
interests of inviolate Protestantism, since it was suspected
that many who were Romanists at heart were in occupation
of clerical place, and the test of subscription would serve to
divide the sheep from the goats.   The Parliament of that
year, therefore, though containing a much stronger Puritan
element than had been seen in any Parliament before, or
perhaps because it contained it, passed an enactment requir-
ing subscription to the Articles (which were at the same
time subjected by Convocation to a further revision, and
restored to their original number of thirty - nine) from
all the clergy of the land — the Queen, though she had
forbidden the Commons to touch the question, as in 1566
she had forbidden the Lords, at last giving her consent to
the Act when she found that the House would not be
denied.[1]   In all probability Elizabeth, angered as she was
by the disaffection of some of the English Roman Catholics,
and irritated by the excommunicating Papal Bull of the
previous year, was much less disinclined to assent to a
statutory doctrinal formulation in the Protestant sense than
she had formerly been.   In any case the Act was passed,
being, indeed, only the logical completion of the course
which had all through been pursued ; and so, in doctrine as
in discipline, the work of organisation was made complete.

The whole process, in fact, as the foregoing review
enables us to see, was organisation naked and unashamed,
organisation built up (at any rate so far as Elizabeth herself
was concerned) for its own sake, organisation pursued
regardless as to what more might follow, or as to whether
anything more might follow, after perfect organisation was
obtained.   And Elizabeth, and Elizabeth's ideals, were all
through the dominant powers.   It may be freely admitted
that many of the ecclesiastics whom the Queen employed
for the fulfilling of her policy were actuated by motives of
a sincerely religious kind, and looked beyond organisation
itself to a real furtherance of the interests of religion—a

[1] Dewes, *Journal of all the Parliaments of Elizabeth*, p. 184.

furtherance which insistence on organisation was, as they supposed, certain to produce. Nevertheless, even with them organisation came before life. And the fact that it did so forced them, under the conditions of the time, religiously swayed as they themselves may have been, to be subordinate to, and servants of, a policy which was not religious at all. Whatever higher motives may have worked in men like Parker and his coadjutors were enveloped and lost in the motives that ruled the Queen, becoming almost immaterial in consequence ; and the Queen, finding that, though the motives of these men were different from hers, their methods were the same as those she clung to, used their acquiescence in her methods for her own ends, while refusing to trouble herself about their motives or about the truly religious ends for which they may have cared the most. Their love for organisation, though in itself a nobler thing than Elizabeth's, did but serve to feed the Queen's power of bringing success to her own meaner love. Taking the thing as a whole, therefore, the settlement was simply a matter of planning, contriving, and trimming—or, in other terms, a matter of killing rather than of making alive. It was under Elizabeth's political instinct, and under Elizabeth's love of decorum and order, that the settlement of the English Church was reached. These were the things that counted. And it was the triumph and glorification of organisation, valued for what it was, that was signalised when the work of settlement was done.

Section 2

The Rise of the Independents

AUTHORITIES.—A full account of the early Independents is to be found in Hanbury's *Ecclesiastical Memorials relating to the Dissenters*, and some account of most of the prominent actors in the drama is given in Neal's *History of the Puritans*. For Congregationalism see also Dale's *History of Congregationalism* and Waddington's *Congregational History*. The last-named book, though badly arranged, contains a mass of useful information. Dexter's *Congregationalism of the last Three Hundred Years as seen in its Literature* needs correction on some points of detail, but is on the whole an invaluable and exhaustive study of the topic. For the Baptists, consult Crosby's *History of the Baptists*, *Early English Baptists*, by Evans, Ivimey's *History of the Baptists*, and Taylor's *History of the General Baptists*. Strype's *Annals of the Reformation* gives some of the most prominent facts from the Church historian's point of view, though Strype has no

conception of the importance of the Separatist movement. Arber's *Story of the Pilgrim Fathers* gives many original documents—from the standpoint of both friends and foes—connected with the Independents at Scrooby, Gainsborough, Amsterdam, and Leyden, and with the voyage of the Leyden emigrants. Most of the books mentioned in the footnotes are indispensable for a thorough understanding of the matters referred to. In regard to general history, Gardiner's great *History of England* begins with the accession of James.

The ecclesiastical settlement of Elizabeth was, as we have seen, one of great rigidity. It was on organisation, on system—and consequently on adherence to these—that its chief, indeed to all intents and purposes its exclusive, emphasis fell. And as in the time of Edward the Sixth increasing insistence on organisation and on the necessity for an absolute conformity had brought about the up-rising of the Nonconformist spirit,[1] so in the time of Elizabeth, as the Church settled down into immobility yet more pronounced, declaring with yet louder voice that in her present arrangements all ecclesiastical movements had reached their final term, and that henceforth all ecclesiastical movements within her or without her must cease, the Nonconformist spirit woke to strenuous protest once again. Of the protest, largely futile, for which the Nonconformist spirit endeavoured to obtain a hearing within the Church herself we shall speak in the next section : in this, it is with the rise of the Independents, embodying the protest made by the Nonconformist spirit outside the Church, that we are concerned. It was by way of reaction against the hardness of Elizabeth's settlement that the stirring of Independency, as a deliberately thought - out method of Church order, began. The law proved itself then, as it has proved itself repeatedly through England's religious history, that the need for exaltation of life over organisation makes its summons heard, and that the religious instinct of men flings itself for its own fulfilment and salvation upon obedience to the summons, just when the contrary spirit, exalting organisation over life, has done its best or its worst.

It is true that the rise of Independency was a gradual thing. The Independent conception of the Church, and the embodiment of it, did not spring full-fledged into being

[1] *Supra*, p. 140.

just at the moment when the Elizabethan construction of
ecclesiastical affairs received its final touch.   In terming the
rise of Independency the answer of the Nonconformist spirit
to the claim of organisation, we do not mean that Inde-
pendency immediately made good its standing-ground side
by side with the Church as Elizabeth consolidated and
systematised it : for any such sudden seizure of territory
Independency had far too many foes to fight.   The period
really covered by the phrase " The Rise of the Independents "
stretches, in fact, quite beyond Elizabeth's reign.   Perhaps
it is most convenient to make the birth-period of Independency
extend to somewhere about 1630 (and it is up to that date
that the survey of this section may be taken as reaching, so
that it is at the fortunes of Separatism through the reigns of
Elizabeth, of James, and in part of Charles, we are to glance)
—if only for the reason that it became evident just then
how the Nonconformist protest without the established
Church was going to succeed and the Nonconformist protest
within the established Church to fail.   Even the founding of
the first Independent Church in England which really came
to stay cannot be put earlier than 1600, when Elizabeth's
reign was near its close.[1]   But, though the rise of Independ-
ency was thus gradual, though it had a steep and slippery
slope to surmount before, with the summit attained, it could
fling out its banner clear against the sky, yet throughout the
whole of Elizabeth's reign it was pressing on—and pressing
on with no vagueness as to its direction or its goal.   It was
no fortuitous or uncalled-for thing—no mere " sport," if the
word may be allowed.   We may take it as the true embodi-
ment of the inevitable and spontaneous protest which the
Nonconformist spirit always makes when the claim of
organisation has been pushed too far.

Elizabeth, indeed, had been but eight years Queen when
some men and women who—whether or no they had to any
considerable extent formulated a definite Church policy for
themselves—were at least very certainly Separatists from the

[1] This is assuming the date for Cheshunt as correct (*infra*, p. 194).   The
Congregational Church giving the actually oldest date of origin (1566) is at
Horningsham in Wiltshire.   But this was built for some Presbyterian workmen
from Scotland, and came subsequently into Independent hands.   Stoughton,
History of Religion in England (ed. 1881), i. 98, 99.

established order, were arraigned for conscience' sake. And
it is probable that even before this took place, there had
been other congregations of which we know nothing. When
it is remembered that Separatist assemblies were known in
the time of Edward the Sixth, and that in Mary's reign the
re-establishment of Roman Catholicism had given rise to a
number of protesting congregations throughout the land, it
is easy to believe that the spirit which demanded a freer
atmosphere and a larger possibility of movement in religious
matters had never wholly died. And it is *not* easy to
believe that John Robinson was right in declaring that
" there was not one congregation separated in Queen Mary's
days that so remained in Queen Elizabeth's. The con-
gregations were dissolved, and the persons in them bestowed
themselves in their several parishes, where their livings and
estates lay." [1] Robinson was perhaps a little too eager,
particularly after the apostasy of Robert Browne to be
presently noted, to cut Independency loose from all that had
gone before, so that it might come freshly to the judgment
of men, freed from whatever prejudice might overshadow it
through certain incidents of the past. In the face of the
numerous assemblies which, according to the witness of
friends and foes alike, were discovered in one place and
another as Elizabeth's reign went on, and in face of the by
no means insignificant total to which (even allowing for
exaggeration in some of the reports) their membership must
have reached,[2] one is driven to believe that there must have
been many Separatist gatherings whereof no record survives.
They were doubtless at very various stages in the crystallisa-
tion of opinion on ecclesiastical problems, but the process
was going on. They had not reached the Independent goal,
but they were more or less advanced upon the way. One
of these congregations emerges into view in June 1567, when
the Sheriffs, having heard that a company of people which
had hired the Plumbers' Hall, Cannon Street, London,
ostensibly for the celebration of a wedding, was not what it
pretended to be, paid a surprise visit and found more than

[1] *A Justification of Separation from the Church of England*, p. 460, or in
Works (ed. Ashton), ii. 489, 490.
[2] See *infra*, p. 184.

a hundred men and women engaged in a religious service of an unauthorised kind.[1]   An examination before Bishop Grindal of London and the Lord Mayor—an examination carried on with considerable moderation, Grindal being not wholly out of sympathy with some of the arrested worshippers' ideas—resulted in the committal of the sectaries to prison, where they remained for a period of not less, and probably more, than a year.[2]   Prison experience, however, failed to damp their zeal ; for after their release they resumed their worship in the old ways, and—as documents bearing date 1571 indicate—formulated more clearly, not to say more defiantly, than ever their objections to the conformity which was being so stringently imposed.[3]   Their courage does them high honour, for the prison test had been severe.   Richard Fytz, the minister, had died either in jail or, if after recovery of freedom, in consequence of the hardships suffered there ; and, as one of the documents just mentioned informs us, others of the " Lord's servants " had been "pined and killed" in the same way.   The note strikes poignantly.   These people merit reverent remembrance.   But it is evident that the claim sometimes made on behalf of this congregation, to be the first regularly organised Independent Church in England, is pitched too high.   All that they seem to have contended for is a free preaching of the Gospel, a simple administration of the Sacraments, and a proper " discipline " for those by whom it was deserved ; and these things, though included in the Independent idea, are far from exhausting it. About the same time, however, there was at least one assembly which had attained to a much more complete organisation after what was subsequently known as the Independent or Congregational plan.   Somewhat strangely,

[1] Strype, *Life of Grindal* (ed. 1821), p. 169 ff.
[2] Hopkins, *The Puritans*, i. 306-317.   The full account of the examination is given in the scarce book called *Part of a Register*, which has been reprinted by the Parker Society in Grindal's *Remains*, pp. 201-216.
[3] These documents were discovered by Dr. Waddington.   He gives them in *Congregational History*, i. 742-745, and in *Congregational Martyrs*, pp. 11-15. The two citations need to be consulted together in order to obtain a complete idea of the papers.   But Dr. Waddington, overlooking the date 1571 given in one of the documents, thought that they were found by the officers at the time of the Plumbers' Hall arrest.   If Richard Fytz died in prison, this must certainly have been the case with the one bearing his signature.   But in regard to the one which mentions 1571 it is clearly impossible.

we know less of this more developed congregation than of that which was discovered at Plumbers' Hall. The authority for believing in its existence is found in a letter of Grindal's written to Bullinger in June 1568, in which he says, " Some London citizens of the lowest order, together with four or five ministers, remarkable neither for their judgment nor learning, have openly separated from us ; and sometimes in private houses, sometimes in the fields, and occasionally even in ships, they have held their meetings and administered the Sacraments. Besides this, they have ordained ministers, elders, and deacons after their own way, and have even excommunicated some who had seceded from their church." [1] The phrases last quoted clearly point to an ecclesiastical society with a properly constituted order of its own ; and the ordination of ministers by these Separatists (since ministers would be ordained to minister somewhere) seems even to suggest more fellowships than one. Grindal has sometimes been supposed to refer in this letter to the Plumbers' Hall company, but as the letter speaks of this faction having been discovered " last winter "—that is, during the winter of 1567, when these captured at the Hall were already in prison—it is clear that another association is meant. Evidently, then, there was, at this early period of Elizabeth's reign, a very definite up-rising of the Independent spirit, more or less conscious of itself and its implications, and preparing the way for the fuller manifestation that was soon to come. And if, on the one hand, we must not claim too much for these early congregations, nor look upon them as Independent Churches full-fledged, on the other hand we must not unduly belittle them or deny all continuity between them and later growths. It is true that after their first emergence they pass underneath the waters again, and their subsequent history, if they had any, is lost. But it is going much too far to say of the movement, as one writer says, " It was sporadic ; it was sterile ; as it had no ancestry, it left no posterity." [2] It was no such Melchizedek among religious events. The quickly following multiplication of Independent

[1] *Zurich Letters*, edited for the Parker Society by Rev. Hastings Robinson, i. 201, 202.
[2] H. M. Dexter, *The Congregationalism of the last Three Hundred Years*, p. 115.

adherents makes it impossible to believe that these early Separatists, in their passing from the scene, left the stage entirely empty, with an absolute interval before the next group appeared.   The principle of the " economy of miracle " —since on this theory we should have two miracles instead of one—forbids.   The Plumbers' Hall assembly and the other one mentioned in Grindal's letter, though they are not the full flower of Independency, are certainly the first appearance of the infant plant above the ground : these congregations, though they cannot claim the name of Independent Churches, are too closely associated, both in spirit and more particularly in time, with the Independent Churches of a few years afterwards to be looked upon as if they had but flashed meteor-wise across the ecclesiastical sky ; and it is at least possible that one or other of the congregations mentioned above—or perhaps a fusion of the two—had an actual continued existence as the " Ancient Church " which we shall presently meet.[1]

But the first man who has survived in history as the advocate of anything like a systematic Independency is Robert Browne.[2]   His story has often been told, occasionally perhaps with too much of laudation, but not seldom with too much of blame.   It cannot be recited at length here ; but it should be said that representations of the story such as that given by Fuller [3] must be received with great caution, and corrected by reference to less biassed authorities. Browne was not a hero of the front rank : neither in his defection from the Church nor in his subsequent return to it does he reveal the glory of the fixed and shining stars ; and his characteristics were precisely those which afforded the greatest chance to Fuller's acid pen.   Assuredly Fuller made the most of the facts, and even stretched them when

[1] Miss Winnifred Cockshott (*The Pilgrim Fathers*, p. 41) definitely identifies the " Ancient Church " with that of Richard Fytz.   But she does not give her authority.

[2] The facts of Browne's story may best be gathered from *The True Story of Robert Browne* by Champlin Burrage, which gives some valuable details only recently discovered, and sets the entire story in fresh light.   Dr. Jessop's article in the *Dictionary of National Biography* lacks psychological insight.   The article by Dr. Powicke in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* (edited by Dr. James Hastings) gives a useful and concise summary.

[3] *Church History* (ed. Brewer), v. 12 ff.

the bare text did not give him sufficient opportunity for the
caustic comment in which he took such abounding delight.
Browne's story, nevertheless, is one of shifting light and
shade ; and it has pathos as the story of a promise
unfulfilled, of a purpose that died ineffectually away.   It is
in 1580, when he was about thirty years of age, that we
find him, in conjunction with Robert Harrison, establishing
an Independent Church in the city of Norwich.   To this
he had long been tending, for the influence of Puritanism
had been upon him from early in his career.   When he was
at Cambridge in 1570, Thomas Cartwright, the Presbyterian
leader,[1] was fulfilling there his brief period of work as Lady
Margaret Professor of Divinity ; and a sojourn in the
household of the Rev. Richard Greenham,[2] a well-known
Puritan clergymen, had, after his University career was
ended, driven the Puritan impression further home.   But
the Puritanism which contented itself with influencing the
established Church from within soon came to appear in
Browne's eyes as the merest playing at reform.   By degrees
he evolved for himself his conception of a Church, or rather
of Churches, which should be, not a department of the
State, nor deriving any validity from the State, but first and
foremost congregations of faithful souls.   Drawn to Norwich
at last, perhaps by the fact of Harrison's presence there—
for Harrison had been Browne's senior contemporary at
Cambridge, and had visited the University city once more
while Browne lived in Greenham's house—Browne soon
persuaded Harrison to join him in his more aggressive
plans ; and the two friends thereupon assumed the leader-
ship of a company of people who were dissatisfied with the
existing state of things and were ready to make a new
start.[3]   By a sort of solemn league and covenant the new
Church was formed, the members, as each item of the
programme was put before them, uniting to say, " To this
we give our consent."   Browne was chosen " pastor," Harrison
" teacher " : doubtless the various elements of a true Church

[1] See *infra*, pp. 230 ff.
[2] At Dry Drayton, near Cambridge.
[3] Browne's *A True and Short Declaration, Both of the Gathering and Joining
together of certain Persons ; and also of the Lamentable Breach and Disunion
which fell amongst them*, pp. 19, 20.

polity, as Browne subsequently elaborated them in his works,[1] were more or less completely pieced together : a definite personal piety, a veritable Christian experience, was insisted upon as the basis of a fellowship ; nor was the " discipline "—the supervision and judgment of the religious life and practice of each member by the congregation as a whole—left out of account. This latter point was probably in Browne's own opinion the most important of all ; and his censorious spirit mounted to the occupancy of the judgment seat with all too swift a leap. Indeed it was this excessive haste to constitute himself the final critic of his fellows that was to bring both himself and his enterprise to wreck at last. The description of Browne by the Bishop of Norwich, with its statement that Browne taught " in all disordered manner,"[2] only too accurately sums up the man. He was always an explosive and disintegrating force. For the moment, however, things promised well. And now began something like a crusade. Once the Norwich congregation was formed, Browne's zeal urged him to further efforts, so that he travelled with his fiery cross through almost every town of East Anglia, denouncing both the corruption of the English Church and the pusillanimity of those who, recognising her failure, did not indignantly shake the dust of her ways from off their feet. Arrest and imprisonment, many times repeated, became his portion ; and whatever may be the explanation of Browne's later change, at this time the true martyr-spirit assuredly beat in his breast. At last, the Norwich assembly, harassed like its pastor, and finding its cup of affliction too bitter and too full, turned its eyes toward a land where it seemed freedom and peace might be found : the majority of the company migrated in 1581 to Middelburg in Zealand, Harrison accompanying them and Browne following in one of his hours of recovered freedom ; and thus went over the advanced guard of those numerous Independents for whom Holland was in the ensuing years of trouble to provide a retreat.

It was at Middelburg that Browne wrote his most im-

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[1] See *infra*, pp. 197, 198.
[2] The Bishop of Norwich to Lord Burleigh. See Wright's *Elizabeth and her Times*, ii. 145-147.

portant books, the books out of which his views on Church
polity can be drawn.[1]   But, although his stay abroad was in
this way fruitful, the Church itself had no success and no
rest, and this in great part owing to the violent moods and
temper of its head.   Browne's disposition certainly leant to
the side of fault-finding : that " discipline " on which he
laid such stress often became in his use of it a mere scolding
abuse : between Browne and his colleague Harrison dissen-
sions arose, passed away, and arose again ; and finally, the
congregation turned against its pastor and wanted him to be
gone.   The drama is a miserable one at best, whatever may
be the due blame of each particular actor in it, and need not
be pursued into any of its details of charge and counter-
charge.[2]   It ended in Browne's withdrawal in 1583, the
Middelburg Church being left in Harrison's care and dying
with him when he died in 1594, just a year after the second
Independent emigration from England reached the Dutch
shores.   Browne himself passed out of Nonconformist
history (issuing, however, probably about 1584, his auto-
biography and defence in the " True and Short Declaration "
previously referred to), made his submission to the ecclesi-
astical authorities, and lived thereafter a long life, which was
to have an unhappy end ;[3] but of all this little need here
be said.   Perhaps his inconsistency — for which later In-
dependents poured scorn upon his name and resolutely
refused to own the title of " Brownists " to which their
adversaries endeavoured to fix them down—was not so great
as has usually been supposed.   Browne had been driven
into separation, not so much by a conviction of its essential
rightness and necessity—although, once the step of separation

[1] (1) *A Book which Sheweth the Life and Manners of all True Christians.*
(2) *A Treatise of Reformation without Tarrying for Any.*   (3) *A Treatise upon
23 of Matthew.*   The second of these has been edited by the Rev. T. G. Crippen
for the Congregational Historical Society.   The books were condemned by a
special proclamation, and in 1583 Elias Thacker and John Copping were
executed at Bury for circulating them (Strype, *Annals of the Reformation*, III.
i. 269).

[2] Later on, the " Five Brethren " (see *infra*, pp. 326, etc.) in recounting their
conversion from Puritanism to Independency, say, " We had likewise the
miscarriages and ship-wrecks of the separation (whom ye call Brownists) as land-
marks to forewarn us of those rocks and shelves they ran upon."—*An Apologetical
Narration Humbly submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament*, pp. 4, 5.

[3] He died in Northampton jail, having struck a constable who demanded a
rate.   See any of the biographies previously named.

was taken, some such idea may sometimes have hovered near his brain and occasionally even have settled into possession of it for a while—as by his impatience with the small religious yield, so to call it, of the existing system. When he found that his new Church failed in its turn as the Church he had left failed, he probably came to think that he had been wrong, not in his ideal of a larger and more glowing piety, but in the impatience which had sent him to seek its realisation in strange ways.   There must be "tarrying" for "reformation" after all.   That he was thought by some, even after his lapse, to be still desirous of better things for the Church to which he had returned, appears from a retort made to one of Independency's critics by a defender, " How well Mr. Browne approveth of your Church, though he live in it, if you ask him, I suppose he will tell you." [1]   The old dissatisfaction and yearning still remained, though the old impatience had learnt its lesson (albeit the wrong lesson) and had been bidden go to sleep.   And if this be the right reading of Browne's inner mind, considerable consistency is saved to him ; though it also becomes clear that the instinct which declined to acknowledge him as Independency's true ancestor was sound, quite apart from the apostasy into which he fell.   But whether or no the reading be correct, the actual result of Browne's enterprise is too sadly clear. The establishment of the first Independent congregation makes but an inglorious episode with an inglorious end.

But meanwhile the plant of Separatism had put forth another shoot.   In the year 1586 an unauthorised assembly was discovered at a house in St. Paul's Churchyard, and John Greenwood, who was conducting its worship, was conveyed to jail.   Henry Barrow, the other leader, and really the stronger and more important man of the two (as the authorities were well aware), was absent on the occasion of the arrest ; but, venturing to visit Greenwood in prison a month afterwards, he was immediately seized.   It is probable, though scarcely certain, that Greenwood had come into contact with Robert Browne during the latter's stay in Mr. Greenham's house,[2] so that the first and second

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[1] Ainsworth's *Counterpoyson* (1608), p. 39.
[2] Dr. F. J. Powicke, *Henry Barrow and the Exiled Church at Amsterdam*, p. 12.

growths of Independency may in a manner have sprung
from a single root.   Greenwood had, however, halted for a
little while at an intermediate stage before reaching the
Independent goal, and had been domestic chaplain to Lord
Rich (at Rochford in Essex), whose Puritanism ran to the
length of having services in his own house on something
very different from the Church of England plan.[1]   The
suppression of these services under the anger of Bishop
Aylmer of London[2] sent Greenwood to the metropolis, where
he either found or created[3] the assembly mentioned just
now—the " Ancient Church," as it has always been called.
Barrow had reached the Independent position through a
very decided religious experience of " conversion " ;   and
while he was being " missed at Court by his consorts and
acquaintance " and it was being bruited abroad that Barrow
had turned Puritan,[4] rumour fell short of truth, for Barrow
had really passed swiftly through, or skirted, Puritanism and
had taken a still more pronounced stand.   He had established
himself upon the Separatist ground.   The arrest of the two
Independents was the beginning of an imprisonment which
lasted no less than seven years, though Greenwood was for
a very brief interval in 1592 set at large.   Nothing was
spared that could break them down.   Examination followed
examination—before the High Commission, before Bishops
and Archbishop, before the great Burleigh himself ; while in
picturing the prison horrors of those days imagination is
hardly likely to go too far.   Yet Barrow and Greenwood
stood firm.   Now and then, indeed—and small wonder !—
we catch the echo of a pleading voice, and the faint plashing
of tears through it, with which Barrow petitioned the Queen
for relief, or counted off the slow and pain-laden years.
And it is true that at the interview with Burleigh—to which
Burleigh himself may have come with some inclination
toward leniency—Barrow's over-wrought nerves betrayed

[1] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation*, III. i. 177-180.

[2] Grindal who, as we saw (*supra*, p. 175) was Bishop of London at the time
of the Plumbers' Hall arrests, had become Archbishop of York in 1570.   Sandys
succeeded him in London.   On Parker's death in 1575 Grindal went from York
to Canterbury and Sandys from London to York, Aylmer taking the London see.

[3] Found it, if the " Ancient Church " was a perpetuation of the Plumbers'
Hall assembly.   Created it, if otherwise.   See *supra*, p. 177.

[4] A. Young, *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*, p. 434.

him, and he made himself and his cause small in Burleigh's eyes. But on the main question there was no faltering. Indeed, through their years in prison Barrow and Greenwood, sometimes separately and sometimes in collaboration, produced and—having somehow secured the connivance of their guards—sent out into the world a mass of literature that fully covered and bravely defended the Independent case.[1] They died fighting. But they had to die. Whitgift, the successor of Grindal at Canterbury in 1583, would brook no faintest disobedience to the Church. He was an arch-inquisitor, and of an enduring Torquemada-like mood. There can be no question that in him it was the persecutor's spirit which ruled, a spirit which, sincere as it may have been, was simply the spirit of bigotry through and through. For although in the end it was nominally for treason against the Queen that the martyrs met their doom, and although in the minds of the masses it may have been difficult (having regard to Romanist plots against the throne) to distinguish between religious recalcitrancy and political disaffection, Whitgift was far too acute a man not to know better. These men could have been no traitors in his eyes. But in his fixed resolve to lord it over the consciences of men he sprang at the chance which the circumstances of the time— coupled with certain expressions on the part of the prisoners which, really intended as abstract statements on the theme of the relation between the State and the Church, might be twisted by those so inclined into treasonable shape—put into his hand. In 1593 Barrow and Greenwood suffered at Tyburn ; and little more than a month after their execution, John Penry—who, though always a Puritan,[2] at any rate since the renunciation of Romanism which he had probably made in his University days, had only become a Separatist (joining the " Ancient Church ") a year before, and who was principally obnoxious in the eyes of Whitgift and the Bishops as the supposed author of the " Martin Marprelate " Tracts [3] —underwent a similar fate.[2]

[1] A list of these works is given in J. H. Shakespeare's *Baptist and Congrega-tional Pioneers*, pp. 79, 80. [2] See *infra*, pp. 208 ff.
[3] In connection with these three martyrdoms, the *Examinations of Henry Barrowe, John Greenwood, and John Penrie before the High Commissioners and Lordes of the Counsel* should be consulted. This gives the prisoners' own account.

But the martyrdom of Barrow, Greenwood, and Penry did not mean the end of the " Ancient Church." It has been mentioned that in 1592 Greenwood was for a short time at liberty ; and during his time of freedom the constitution of the congregation, which had hardly up till then formed a regular Church, was formally framed, Francis Johnson being chosen for its pastor.[1]   When Greenwood was re-arrested, Johnson shared his captivity ; but the Church, enduring many alternations of fortune, some or other of its members being often in prison, meeting now in this place and now in that, maintaining a precarious existence like that of the hunted with the hunters close upon its track, still lived on.   A year after the execution of Barrow and Greenwood, a majority of the Church followed the example of Browne's company, and fled across the sea.   This was in part the following of counsel which Penry had sent to the brethren just before his death ; but it was in part also necessitated by a new law which sentenced Separatism to banishment unless it consented to conform.[2]   For by 1593 it had become evident to the authorities that Separatism was a larger thing than they had supposed, and not to be so easily suppressed as they had hoped.   That it was growing fast is sufficiently evident from a remark of Sir Walter Raleigh's, made in the Parliament this year (in a speech which, while branding the " Brownists " as mischievous and worthy of death, nevertheless pleaded that the proposed measure of banishment might involve the innocent with the guilty, and be harmful in other ways) to the effect that there were no less than twenty thousand " Brownists " in the realm.[3]   The estimate was doubtless exaggerated, probably including sectaries and faddists of every kind as well as

The documents may be found also in the *Harleian Miscellany*, iv. 340-365.   One of the fullest accounts of Penry's case, exposing its gross injustice, is in George Punchard's *History of Congregationalism*, iii. 155-192.   See also Strype's *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), ii. 42-50, 175-186.

[1] For Johnson's previous history, see A. Young, *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*, pp. 424, 425.

[2] Of course the Act pressed upon Puritans and Presbyterians as well as upon Separatists.   See *infra*, p. 241.

[3] Dewes, *A Journal of all the Parliaments during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, p. 517.   Dexter (*The Congregationalism of the last Three Hundred Years*, p. 631) erroneously gives 1580 as the date of Raleigh's speech.

"Separatists" of the genuine Independent order; but it points to a great increase in the number of the last-named. There must have been many Churches besides those of which any account remains—such, for instance, as that "other assembly also" which Bancroft quotes "Collins, a man amongst them, not unlearned," as hinting at after a mention of the "Ancient Church."[1] It seemed easier to drive the Separatists abroad than to suppress them at home; and the Conventicle Act of 1593 accordingly decreed that they were to be banished, and put to death if they returned. The greater part of the "Ancient Church"—though a section elected to run the risks of staying behind—made its home in Amsterdam, where in 1597 Francis Johnson, having escaped death when Barrow and Greenwood suffered it, but having been held for five years longer in jail, resumed his pastorate at their head. Henry Ainsworth, distinguished both intellectually and spiritually as one of the finest of the early protagonists of Independency,[2] had, previous to Johnson's coming, associated himself with the exiled community, the office of "teacher" being committed to his hands.[3] The Amsterdam Church was to have a fairly long history; and though its end lies beyond the limits of this section, the salient facts may as well be set down—all the more that it was not in England they were wrought out. For the "Ancient Church" there was no return. Appeals to James the First on his accession in 1603 met with no response.[4] The exiles could but tell their vainly longing hearts that the homeward road was closed, and that it was in a strange land their future must be found. And the future, had they been able to discern it, held little to give them joy. Not even the influence of a spirit so saintly as Ainsworth's was able to save the Church from the division and strife of tongues which speedily set in; and its subsequent history is as sad as that of the Middelburg company under Robert Browne. Between Francis Johnson and his brother

[1] Bancroft, *A Survey of the Pretended Holy Discipline*, p. 429.
[2] Little certain knowledge of Ainsworth's early history is available. Dexter has put together various particulars and conjectures in a note on p. 270 of *The Congregationalism of the last Three Hundred Years*.
[3] See *infra*, p. 197.
[4] These appeals are given in *An Apologie or Defence of such True Christians as are commonly (but unjustly) called Brownists*.

George—the second of whom has left us his own account, written, of course, from his own particular point of view, of the unhappy disputes [1]—there was constant bickering : the quarrel, which had really commenced even before Francis Johnson had left London, and was originally concerned with the fitness or unfitness of the pastor's wife, passed rapidly, like a leaping flame, from theme to theme : charges, some false and some too sadly true, were made by members of the Church against one another—charges of un-Christian behaviour and actual immorality : the sword of excommunication flashed more than once from its sheath ; and at last, divergencies of view between Francis Johnson and Ainsworth on questions of Church polity [2] put estrangement between the Church's trusted guides. Ainsworth at last withdrew in 1610, only to come back two years later when the city magistrates adjudged to him and his followers the rightful possession of the meeting-house, Johnson thus being compelled to withdraw in his turn. Among other consequences of these incessant disturbances was the loss of the fellowship of another emigrant Independent company which, as we shall see, went out from England under John Robinson's leadership in 1608. This company—the " Pilgrim Church " —at first took its way to Amsterdam, but finding in the atmosphere there little that promised a pleasurable or profitable stay, passed on to Leyden to an honourable career, and, incidentally, to make from there at least one kindly but futile attempt at mediation between the contending factions at Amsterdam.[3]   The " Ancient Church " itself, coming at last through storm into calmer seas after Johnson disappeared from the scene,[4] lived on to so late a date as 1701, when on its own application it was absorbed into the English Presbyterian Church in the city where so many vicissitudes—heat of quarrel and cold of decay, light of faithful witness-bearing and shade of sin—had gone to the

[1] *A Discourse of some Troubles and Excommunications in the Banished English Church at Amsterdam.*   This book was discovered by Dr. Dexter in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

[2] See *infra*, p. 198.

[3] See Ainsworth's *An Animadversion on Mr. Richard Clifton's Advertisement*, pp. 133 ff.

[4] Johnson went to Emden, but returned to Amsterdam in 1617 and died in the following year.   Ainsworth died in 1621.

making of its lot.[1] But by 1701 Independency had gone far past the experimental stage in the land of its birth—had, indeed, become one of the outstanding religious factors of its life ; so that, though the tale of the " Ancient Church " is not, save for the bright spot of Ainsworth's connection with it, a tale of vivid brightness, yet the work of its founders, Barrow and Greenwood, had left a worthy legacy after all, and the candle they lit had after all not been put out when the scaffold closed their days.

The two Independent congregations at whose story we have glanced never sent back any seed to be sown in the old English soil whence they had themselves sprung.   Individual private members of the two Churches may of course have returned ; but neither the Middelburg company nor the " Ancient Church " in Amsterdam contributed anything to the furtherance of Independent growth.   The case stands differently with the next two Churches that left England for Holland ; and both of these became missionaries of Independency (albeit of two varieties of it) to England and, in the case of one of them, to the New World as well.   And these two Churches, though their paths speedily diverged, were one in their origin at home.   In certain districts of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, Puritanism of a pronounced type had been gathering strength all through Elizabeth's days, the Puritan conviction passing at last, in the case of one of the worshipping groups (as in the previous individual cases of Browne, Greenwood, Johnson and others) into a conviction that mere Puritanism was ineffectual, and that Independency was the one true way.   In the last year of Elizabeth's life an Independent Church was formed at Gainsborough,[2] separating four years afterwards, in consideration of the distance which some of the worshippers had to come, into two sections, one remaining at Gainsborough and the other meeting at the Manor House of Scrooby.   Of the Gainsborough section John Smyth [3] was first a member and

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[1] The whole story is told in Powicke's *Henry Barrow and the Exiled Church at Amsterdam*, pp. 222-261.

[2] A full account is given in Dr. John Brown's *Pilgrim Fathers of New England*, chaps. ii. and iii.

[3] For Smyth, see Dexter's *The True Story of John Smyth*, which supplements and corrects the information given by earlier writers such as Hanbury and Neal.

afterwards pastor, while John Robinson [1] ministered to the other.   Both sections prospered, but were undone by their very success, inasmuch as increase of numbers and consequent greater prominence only drew down upon them the notice and persecution of their foes.   With both Churches the end was as it had been with the Independent companies of earlier date ; and both, compelled to submit to the doom of exile, found their way to Holland—the Gainsborough Church probably in 1607, and the Scrooby Church certainly in 1608. Neither of the two leaders was destined to come back ; but in Smyth's company was one Thomas Helwys, who was to return for the founding, or at any rate for the hastening, of the Baptist cause in England ; while among the followers of Robinson, though they did not include the Henry Jacob who later on, after a visit to the Leyden Church which marked a turning point in his career, came home to establish the Independent fellowship in Southwark, was William Bradford, then only twenty years of age, but destined to become one of the principal figures among the " Pilgrim Fathers " who in 1620 quitted the Leyden congregation for American shores.   Both the Gainsborough and the Scrooby companies first of all bent their steps to Amsterdam, doubt-less drawn by the fact that the " Ancient Church " was there ; but Smyth with his people alone remained, Robinson and his associates, as already noted, passing on to Leyden before they finally pitched their tents.

It is uncertain whether John Smyth and his followers formally associated themselves with the " Ancient Church," or whether they at once founded a Church of their own. [2]   If formal association was ever set up, it lasted but a very brief time ; and in any case, whatever the first relation between Smyth's party and the others may have been, all communion was soon disowned.   For Smyth, who all through his life

[1] See Dr. Brown's book named in the last note but one, or Bradford's *History of the Plymouth Plantation* (ed. Paget, 1909), p. 8.   An interesting account of various members of the Scrooby Church may be seen in *Collections concerning the Church or Congregation of Protestant Separatists formed at Scrooby*, etc., by Joseph Hunter.

[2] Dr. Powicke (*Henry Barrow and the Exiled Church at Amsterdam*, pp. 249-251) thinks that for a while there was a united Church.   Dr. Dexter, though at one time holding the same view, has given it up in the *True Story of John Smyth*, p. 5.

moved rapidly from position to position, speedily conceived objections to some points in the polity and order of worship adopted in the " Ancient Church," coming to the conclusion that the distinction between Elders and Pastors was untenable,[1] maintaining somewhat curiously that for purposes of worship the Bible must be used only in the original tongues, and vigorously contending, also, that singing was unacceptable to God.[2] If Smyth's party did at first link itself with the " Ancient Church," it was on these points that its secession took place. But very soon Smyth's mind took another and more important step. In 1609 he became a Baptist, with characteristic courage baptizing himself first of all because there was no one competent to do it,[3] and then administering the rite to Helwys and others who had with him accepted Baptist views.[4] But further changes were at hand. Together with his change of opinion on Baptism, Smyth had moved towards Arminianism [5] in his general theology ; and now this movement became so generally accelerated that Helwys, Smyth's companion (even in his Arminian tendencies) hitherto, felt compelled to denounce the new ideas. As the majority of the Church took Helwys' side, Smyth was expelled, passing the rest of his life (till 1612) in fellowship with the Mennonites of Amsterdam, having on his entrance to their communion submitted to yet a third baptism, and having confessed that

[1] See *infra*, pp. 197, 198.

[2] Smyth embodied his views in *The Differences of the Churches of the Separation*, to which Ainsworth replied in *A Defence of the Holy Scriptures, Worship and Ministry used in the Christian Churches separated from Antichrist*.

[3] Crosby (*History of the Baptists*, i. 95 ff.) denies that Smyth baptized himself, and various writers have followed him. But Crosby's whole treatment of Smyth's history was wrought out with imperfect knowledge of the facts. Smyth acknowledges self-baptism in *The last book of John Smyth, called the Retraction of his Errors*, p. 36.

[4] Smyth expounded his Baptist arguments in a book bearing the curious title *The Character of the Beast*.

[5] The difference between Calvinism and Arminianism is too large a matter to be entered upon here. Reference to any standard History of the Church will light upon a sufficient account of it. It may suffice to say that Arminianism lays less stress than does Calvinism upon the will or " decrees " of God, leaving to human nature a greater power of self-determination and spiritual initiative, and also looking upon it as possessing intrinsically a greater moral worth. Modern theologians who claim to be Calvinist, however, very considerably soften down (for the most part) the harshness of Calvin's system ; and perhaps the Calvinism of to-day is not very different from the Arminianism of Smyth. Arminius, it should be said, was a professor at Leyden when Smyth and Robinson arrived in Holland.

it was at their hands he ought to have sought baptism from the first. So Smyth was lost to the Baptist Church whose first stone he had himself laid. But the impulse he had imparted to the Baptist cause did not die away ; and in his adoption of Baptist views he was, all unknowing, starting an influence which was to spread out in widening circles and to be felt in the England he had left. For Helwys, convinced in the end that it was wrong to escape persecution by seeking the safety of a foreign land, brought his people back in 1611 across the sea, and in Newgate Street, London, established the first English Baptist Church.[1] So did the tide which had hitherto been bearing the Independents out from their native shore begin to flow back at last.

The Leyden Church—whose own particular history differs from that of the other Churches at which we have glanced in that it affords a picture of continuous and perfect spiritual prosperity and peace[2]—made its contribution to a restored Independency in England when in 1616 Henry Jacob returned. Jacob had been a Puritan of the Puritans ever since his ordination in the English Church, and even while maintaining an argument against the Separatists for what seemed to him the extremity of their protest, had allowed no bitterness to poison his tongue. Poised for a while between the Puritanism which stayed within the Church and the Separatism which quitted it—unable to exercise the ordinary ministry of the establishment, and yet unwilling to surrender it—Jacob had shepherded some English exiles at Middelburg towards the end of Elizabeth's reign.[3] Returning home at the accession of James, he saw his hopes of reform shrivelled one by one in the fierce fire of the King's arrogance, though it was apparently not until 1610 that the last hope was consumed. In that year he passed over to Leyden, passing over also, though with some final struggles, to the doctrines which the Leyden pastor taught. Jacob's movements in the immediately subsequent years are a little obscure. One thing, however, is certain— that if his progress to Independency had been slow, his

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[1] Crosby, *History of the Baptists*, i. 271, 272.

[2] Consult the description given in Bradford's *History of the Plymouth Plantation* (ed. Paget, 1909), pp. 15-17.

[3] W. Steven, *History of the Scottish Church, Rotterdam*, etc., p. 316.

foothold in it remained firm when once it had been gained ; and in 1616 he appeared as Independency's apostle in London, emulating in the cause of strictly Congregational Independency the courage which in the cause of Baptist Independency Helwys had previously displayed. In certain respects circumstances had become somewhat more propitious—or perhaps somewhat less determinedly unpropitious is all that can be said. It is true, as has been said, that the petitions presented by the exiled Separatists on the new King's accession had been ignored. The King, indeed, was as stiff-necked as Elizabeth had been, and as little inclined to countenance any deviation from the ordained rule. But Abbot, who was now upon the archiepiscopal throne, was less unrelenting in the hunting down of Puritans and Separatists than his predecessor Bancroft ;[1] and some of the Puritans were beginning to think that their Puritanism could only be vindicated, at any rate could only succeed, if they went the way that Jacob himself had gone. To a kind of benevolent neutrality towards Separatism, at any rate, some of them had reached ; and it is said that some of them actually countenanced Jacob in the venture he was determined to make.[2] Countenanced or not, the venture was made. The Southwark Church, having been founded on " a day of solemn fasting and prayer,"[3] entered upon what was to prove a long and prosperous career, and became the fruitful mother of daughter-Churches of both the Congregational and Baptist branches,[4] some of which are living and working still. So did Robinson's Church at Leyden, like Smyth's Church at Amsterdam, fling back upon English soil a few seeds from the plant which had been up-rooted from its native earth some years before. We may note also, in passing, that even abroad the leaven of Congregationalism spread to some extent among British settlers in other places than those already named, since we have information of a Church of the order being established at Rotterdam in 1623.[5]

[1] Bancroft had succeeded Whitgift in 1604, and had died in 1610.

[2] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, ii. 92.

[3] Neal, as previous reference. Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 198-200. [4] *Infra*, p. 301.

[5] Steven, *History of the Scottish Church, Rotterdam*, etc. p. 333. This Church subsequently became Presbyterian.

And, although the matter does not properly fall within
our range, mention must at least be made of the
great achievement of the Leyden Church in transplanting
Independency to the New World. It was from Robinson's
company that the "Pilgrim Fathers" (not moved to their
pilgrimage by any dissensions, but being dismissed with all
honour and tenderest love) sailed in 1620 on the memorable
voyage which had its ending at Plymouth Rock.[1]

It was clear then, that after all the repressive measures
of Elizabeth and in spite of James's unmitigated contempt
(for contemptuous is perhaps the word which best describes
the King's attitude towards all who presumed to avow any
religious or ecclesiastical ideas different from his own),
Independency was not going to die. And throughout the
remainder of James's reign and the early years of the reign
of Charles the First (to stretch our gaze no further for the
moment) the fact became clearer still. Independency had
fixed on England the hold which England, or England's
rulers, had so often tried to throw off. And the hold, once
fixed, grew tighter. After the two foundations we have
noted—that of Helwys in 1611 and that of Henry Jacob in
1616—there was increase in both the Baptist and the
Congregational [2] sections of Independency, although the
swiftest increase, up to the end of the period now under
review, took place in the Churches which held by Helwys'
views. It is not difficult to light upon at least one reason
why the Baptists at first outstripped the Congregationalists
in the race. As we saw previously, there had been in the
country for generations certain who held that the application
of baptism to infants was an illegitimate rite ;[3] and it may
be plausibly conjectured that some of these, finding their
protest suddenly achieving in Helwys and his followers a
much more articulate voice than they had themselves been
able to give it, identified themselves with the new cause.
In 1618 the Baptists had grown sufficiently aggressive to
venture upon the "first book in English published against

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[1] Bradford, *History of the Plymouth Plantation* (ed. Paget, 1909), chaps. iv.-x.
and Alexander Young, *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*, chaps. iv.-x.

[2] These two names will be henceforward adopted in conformity with current
usage, except when it is not required to distinguish between the two sections.

[3] *Supra*, p. 128.

infant baptism " : [1] by 1626 there were Baptist Churches at Lincoln, Amersham, Stoney Stratford, Coventry, Salisbury, and Tiverton ; [2] so that Helwys, who did not die until that year, had the satisfaction of beholding with his closing eyes how the work of his hands had been confirmed. These first Baptist Churches (it had better be stated in view of subsequent events) were not the direct ancestors of the Baptist denomination of to-day, though on the doctrine which gives them their name they held to-day's Baptist view.[3] The Churches springing from what may be termed the Helwys source were Arminian in their theology, as were both Smyth, their original inspirer, and, less pronouncedly, Helwys himself, while the outstanding Baptist tradition has been Calvinistic throughout the years ; and although, as was just now said, modern Calvinism may be nearly allied to the ancient Arminianism, the older Calvinism was far as the poles are asunder from the Arminianism of its day. The fountain whence the main Baptist stream has flowed forth we shall presently discover starting in another place : it is not in these first Baptist communities that it is to be found. But at the outset they ran well, though not destined to maintain their front-rank place. And besides their successful testimony to the Independent principle, they have another claim to the esteem, not of Nonconformists alone, but of all who hold freedom of thought for one of the most priceless possessions of mankind. For it was Leonard Busher, a member of the Newgate Street Church, who published in 1614 a booklet [4] advocating freedom both for thought and for the expression of thought, and daring to say that not even Roman Catholics and Jews (who were almost universally looked upon as being

[1] Crosby, *History of the Baptists*, i. 128.

[2] See Evans, *Early English Baptists*, ii. 26, 54, and Taylor, *History of the English General Baptists*, i. 96, 97.

[3] With the proviso, however, that this is restricted to that part of the doctrine which makes baptism follow upon profession of faith. The question of *method*, as between sprinkling or immersion, had not yet come to the front.

[4] *Religious Peace* : *or A Plea for Liberty of Conscience*. See Masson, *Life of Milton*, iii. 102, 103, and Evans, *Early English Baptists*, i. 229-231. Busher's tract has been reprinted by the Hanserd Knollys Society. It is a landmark in the development of the idea of toleration, and it is curious that no mention of it is made by Lecky in his brief sketch of the history of toleration in England (*The Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe*, ed. 1870, ii. 70-84). Marsiglio of Padua had previously enunciated the full toleration doctrine on the Continent (Creighton, *Persecution and Tolerance*, pp. 94-97).

necessarily and for ever outside the pale) were to be denied the right of either private or public speech. In its early days, then, the Baptist cause took swift and long strides, forcing itself ahead of the Congregational cause which was running at its side. Nevertheless, Congregationalism also— although it was not till after the virtual defeat of Puritanism within the Church of England, and the consequent accession of many Puritans to the Congregational ranks, that it greatly hastened its movement—Congregationalism also proved that it had life within itself. Indeed, though Jacob's establishment of the Southwark Church is rightly looked upon as an important new beginning in Congregational history, it must be remembered that a silent growth had probably been going on even while Congregationalism was, for the most part, exiled in a foreign land. There is a Congregational Church at Cheshunt which asserts its descent from a date as far back as 1600,[1] and another at Ledbury coming down from 1607.[2] It must be borne in mind, also, that both at Robert Browne's migration from Norwich and at the migration of the " Ancient Church " from London a minority had been left behind ; and even though the candles burnt with only a flickering flame, some few people must now and then have been drawn into the narrow circle of their light. One conjectures, too, that Browne, in his many wanderings through the eastern counties, had directly or indirectly initiated other communities besides that at Norwich, of which nothing is known. We mark a sign, besides, of In- dependent fellowships growing up in other parts of England in the fact that in 1604 a small number of people, led by Thomas White, went out from somewhere on the western side of the country and joined (though only temporarily, and soon establishing a Church of their own) Johnson's company at Amsterdam.[3] And that section of the " Ancient Church " which stayed at home at least won a certain number of adherents to take the place of those who were lost through failure of resolution or through death ; for every now and then (for instance, in 1608, when a " nest of Brownists " was

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[1] *Congregational Year Book.*   [2] *Ibid.*

[3] Dexter, *The Congregationalism of the Last Three Hundred Years as seen in its Literature*, p. 310. Quoting from Johnson's *An Inquirie and Answer of Thomas White, his Discovery of Brownism.*

discovered at Finsbury [1]) we find it proved, by the witness of adversaries if in no other way, that this Church refused to be beaten down.   We have to picture it, in fact, as existing side by side with Jacob's Church after 1616, not always, it is to be feared, in the most cordial relations with it,[2] and perhaps enfeebled, or even somewhat irritated and despoiled of its fine quality, by all that it had gone through.   Jacob's Church continued to prosper, though Jacob himself emigrated to America in 1624 ; and meanwhile another Congregational Church had made its appearance, also in Southwark,[3] three years before, so that the witnessing voices grew.   This new Church passed over in a body to Ireland before long, for a reason which remains obscure, but which can scarcely have lain in persecution, inasmuch as just at this time the hand of the authorities fell less heavily, and persecution would in any case have told just as much against Jacob's Church as against any other—its migration, however, proving only temporary, since we find it in its old quarters again in the Laudian decade, and figuring prominently in one incident just after the Laudian decade had passed.[4]   Its formation at any rate showed that the Congregational leaven was at work.   Traces exist, also, of a company of " Brownists " at Yarmouth in 1629 and 1630.[5]   The year last mentioned is claimed by the Congregational Church at Bolsover in Derbyshire as the year of its rise.[6]   If Congregationalists during these years fell behind the Baptists in the rate of their progress, at least they did not stand still.   And in addition to the Churches we have named, there must have been others slowly crystallising, as it were, out of the Congregational tendency into definite shape as the period passed on ; for in 1631, just a year after its close, Bishop Hall of Exeter wrote to Laud,

[1] See a letter from John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, given in Dr. Thomas Birch's *Court and Times of James the First*, i. 77.   Chamberlain adds that Trundle, the preacher, was apprehended.

[2] A Church, which was probably this " Ancient Church," wrote to Robinson at Leyden in 1624 to enquire whether he considered Jacob's company a " true Church."   It appears that some of Jacob's company occasionally attended the Established Church, and so gave cause of scandal to the enquirers.   Robinson's reply is given in Ashton's edition of his *Works*, iii. 381-385.

[3] Wilson, *History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches in London*, iv. 122 ff.   [4] See *infra*, p. 327.

[5] Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), i. 355.

[6] *Congregational Year Book*.

taking as his text the fact that there were eleven congrega-
tions of Separatists about the City, and adding, with what is
perhaps rather quaintness than pathos, " Neither do I write
this to inform your Lordship of what you know not, but to
condole the misery of the time. *Deus meliora*." [1]   Evidently
Bacon had been far wrong, and had uttered not so much his
thought as the wish which was father to it, when he said
that the Brownists—who, he observes, were " when they were
at the most, a very small number of very silly and base
people "—were in 1592 " suppressed and worn out." [2]   By
1630, four years after Bacon's death, there was a very
different tale to tell.

In the progress of Independency from the beginning of
Elizabeth's reign up to the fifth year in the reign of Charles
the First, the above are the outstanding and essential facts.
Here and there, as we have reviewed what may be called the
external story of the Independent communities, we have
caught a glimpse of the principles for which they stood, of
their methods and ideals.   What more needs to be added
on this head may be briefly set down.   The Independent
form of service was simple, probably resembling, with some
differences of detail, that employed in the majority of Non-
conformist Churches to-day.   In regard to the general
religious doctrines which the Independents held fast, we
have seen that both the Calvinist and Arminian varieties
(though the first greatly predominated) were represented
among them, just as both varieties were represented
in the established Church from which they seceded : it
was not, in fact, on distinctively doctrinal questions that
the Independents struck out their own particular line.
The principal concern with them was the question of
the Church, its constitution and order ; and on this topic
their primary contention was that the appointment of con-
stitution and order by human authority, by the State,
was an essentially un-religious thing, and a practical denial
of the Lordship of Christ.   The true order of things was
that Christ Himself should, through the individual members

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[1] Hall's *Works* (ed. 1863), x. 515.

[2] In *Certain Observations made upon a libel* (*Works*, ed. Spedding, Ellis,
and Heath, viii. 165).

of His Church, bring about whatever system was required : every association of Christians was, in immediate contact with Christ, to receive its instructions directly from His lips. One can only characterise as extraordinary the account given by one writer [1]—that Browne, Harrison, and the other Independents simply made an attempt to set up a sort of Presbyterianism, contenting themselves with single Church " discipline " instead of "a central government or association " through lack of sufficient numbers—that the system then crystallized as it was—that " the movement had been one for Presbyterianism," but that "its actual result was Congregationalism." Independency did not come thus by accident. Its theory was as outlined just now. That the early Independents were not entirely true to the theory they professed—that they not only propounded the doctrine of Christ's working through the Church members, but also (and contradictorily) were ready to prescribe the results to which such working must inevitably lead—that while theoretically leaving the Church to its Master's direct instruction, they claimed to know just what that instruction would be—that they thus brought back again the human authority which they had pronounced incompetent and a procedure which they had condemned as *ultra vires* before—has to be admitted, and this we shall presently have to note again. But they sought, at any rate, to set up Churches such as should and would be set up under the immediate inspiration of the Church's Head. And in the minds of all those whose names have been mentioned there was a unity of general plan, though differences on certain points occasionally emerge. Robert Browne [2] held, as of course did all the others, that each Church must be a company of men and women whose hearts had been truly drawn to Christ. Its officers, with him, were a Pastor, who was to have general oversight and to " exhort "; a Teacher, who, " with less gift to exhort and apply," was a sort of subordinate Pastor,

[1] Roland G. Usher, *The Presbyterian Movement in the Reign of Elizabeth*, pp. xxiv, xxv.
[2] Browne's system is given in *A Book which Sheweth the Life and Manners of all True Christians.* A summary may be found in Hanbury's *Historical Memorials relating to the Dissenters*, i. 20-22, or in Dale's *History of Congregationalism*, pp. 126-128.

having it as his task to instruct the mind rather than to press the conscience ; Elders, who constituted a description of advisory Council ; Deacons or Relievers, who gathered and distributed the charity of the Church ; and the "Widow," who visited and prayed with the sick. All these held their offices at the call of the Church ; but Browne clung fast to an idea which Independency has often dropped—that this call was not simply a matter of voting in a candidate according to the will of a chance majority, but was to be the very voice of Christ echoed in the voice of a people who knew what the voice of Christ had said ; so that in the end the Church, although in superficial appearance a democracy, was in reality no such thing.[1] Other points, such as the provision for fellowship and mutual counsel between separate associations, are amply provided for—the whole scheme, indeed, being most carefully wrought out. And when we have grasped these salient elements in Browne's system, we know how, in the main, the system of each later leader in its turn was framed ; for the general outline remains the same. But on some matters a various reading was some-times advocated. Barrow[2] was prepared to put more actual authority into the elders' hands than Browne's programme allowed : he disclaimed, indeed, any intention of denying or disturbing the equality which Browne declared to subsist among all the members of the Church ; but in practice, his ideas of the honour due to the eldership led to a very real exaltation of the elders over the general body, and to a rending of power out of the general body's hands; and it was this insistence, not alone on something special, but on something oligarchical, in an elder's office that led to the alienation of Ainsworth from Francis Johnson (since on this question the latter[3] followed Barrow's lead) in the " Ancient

[1] The treatment of Independency by historians has been almost uniformly based upon the idea that Independency represented the application of demo-cratic principles to Church life. For a recent instance, see Seaton's *Theory of Toleration under the later Stuarts*, p. 58. Nothing could be further from the truth, though it is easy to see how for superficial observation the error arose. It must be confessed, also, that many modern Independents are themselves misled in the same way.

[2] In *A True Description of the Visible Congregation of The Saints*.

[3] Johnson had been definitely Presbyterian at an earlier phase, and this may account for his exaltation of the eldership.

Church " at Amsterdam. John Smyth, as we have before
noticed,[1] came to believe that pastors and elders were one
and the same. In Robinson's system [2] we are back again
on the platform of Robert Browne, though Robinson himself
and his Leyden Church sat much more loosely to all rules,
were much more discriminating as to what was essential
and what was not, and were prepared to take as elastic
some prescriptions which had been rigid cast-iron to Browne.
Certainly Robinson did not share Barrow's tendency to an
absolutism of the elders ; and whether there were several elders
or only one, or even temporarily none at all, was not a matter
of supreme importance in his eyes. In the Southwark Church
of 1616, pastor and deacons are the only officers named.[3]
Such differences as these are found. But, looking at the
thing broadly, we see that the scheme of ecclesiastical order
held by the Independents was substantially the same
throughout their ranks. Barrow's spirit, indeed, threatened
an important departure from the original track ; but with
this exception, agreement was in all essentials unbroken.
One other thing must be set down. On the important
matter of the relations between the State—or the " magis-
trate," to use the speech of the time—and the religious
bodies, the Independents of these years had not reached a
final position, and had assuredly not realised whither the
logical following of their own principles was bound to
conduct their feet. The truth that the State was not of its
own initiative to order the Church was indeed the guiding
star. But they were not so ready to disclaim or dispense
with the help of the State in enforcing what the Church might
determine or desire. It is true that here and there among
the words of the Separatists there occur expressions which
point to something like recognition of the principle of
freedom ; but they make only a very occasional gleam of
gold upon a background of prevailing black ; and with the
before-mentioned exception of some of the Baptists,[4] the

[1] *Supra*, p. 189.

[2] See *A Justification of Separation from the Church of England* (*Works*, ed.
Ashton, ii.), and *A Just and Necessary Apology of certain Christians no less con-
tumeliously than commonly called Brownists or Barrowists* (*Works*, ed. Ashton,
iii. 1-79).

[3] Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 199.   [4] *Supra*, pp. 193, 194.

Independents considered that while the State must not coerce the Church, it was bound to serve the Church by coercing the mass of men, at least to the extent of forbidding the open practice of any religion but the true. In brief, while the State was not to make the Church, it was to secure the honour of the Church when once the Church had made itself. The claim made for Robert Browne by Dr. Dexter [1] —that " he is entitled to the proud pre-eminence of having been the first writer clearly to state and defend in the English tongue the true doctrine of the relations of the magistrate to the Church "—melts away, spite of some of Browne's occasional phrases, on closer examination ; and Henry Jacob (who, however, was writing with some idea, a quite futile one, of winning James to complacency, and may in consequence have slightly over-stated his view) explicitly declares that " we and all true visible Churches " ought to be kept in order, if need should arise, by the stretching out of the magistrate's arm.[2]   The real and full doctrine that beyond applying the common law for the protection of property and life, the State has nothing whatever to do with the Church, was approaching with but very slow steps, and was not for a long period yet heard knocking at the door.

With all this in view, we are able to make some estimate of the degree in which these early Independents embodied the Nonconformist spirit, and subordinated organisation to life. In calling them Independents, and asserting that their Churches were Independent Churches, something is already said ; for Independency, although it does not ensure the working out of the Nonconformist spirit, certainly tends towards it.[3]   It is possible, of course, for any single community of Christian men and women to sever itself from all external authority, to fence itself round with barriers over which it permits no interference from beyond to intrude, and yet within its own

[1] *The Congregationalism of the Last Three Hundred Years*, p. 101.

[2] *A Confession and Protestation of the Faith of certain Christians in England*, article 27.   James, of course, took no notice of this treatise, or of a petition which the Separatists presented to him about the same time.   To relax hostile measures in some degree, as was done in Archbishop Abbot's time, was one thing.   Positive signs of favour were quite another.

[3] On this point (though the author deals particularly with the relation between Independency and Congregationalism), see R. W. Dale, *History of English Congregationalism*, pp. 374-376.

territories to make organisation the all-important thing : with all its independence, it may be quite mechanical in its conception of religion, and may view religious processes in the souls of its members as contingent upon something else than an inward attitude toward and an inward relation with God ; nor does a mere narrowing of the circle necessarily imply that the movement within is from centre to circumference instead of from circumference to centre. Nevertheless, one may put it that Independency at least gives to the Nonconformist spirit a greater chance. The concentration of interest it involves, the drawing in of the boundaries of the field, makes it more likely that there will come a recognition of the supremacy of the individual inner life. So much, at any rate, the first Congregationalists and Baptists had gained. But they went further, and, as we have seen, insisted that all Church order and system should be Christ working Himself out, as it were, through the members of His Church. The Nonconformist *theory*, that is, they held in all its fulness. And the theory, being itself one that the Nonconformist spirit inspired, should have provided an open door at which the Nonconformist spirit could come in to do its perfect work. But the defect with these men was that, while they held the theory, they did not entirely exemplify it. Or one might put it that they tried a short cut to its results, and too soon congratulated themselves on having reached the goal. Everything was to come out of a spiritual relation ; but this meant that all who accepted the theory must, so to say, fling themselves back to the point at which that spiritual relation was constituted, must feel it and watch it being constituted in their own deep experience, and must accept whatever in the way of order and system might be produced. Order and system must come into the world, not as the mind framed them (however just and true the theory by which the mind ordered its work), but as they were framed by spiritual creative forces starting from beyond the man himself, and only passing through the man on their way to make the order and system they required. It was here that the early Independents failed to take and practise the consequences of the doctrines they professed. Whether or no the throwing of themselves as instruments

into the hand of the inner spiritual power—leaving empty the field of organisation, and bidding their own minds as it were stand aside from it while the inner spiritual power showed its will and created the accordant realities to fill it —whether this would have resulted in the form of Church polity which they actually prescribed, need not be discussed. In any case the spirit of the whole thing would have been different ; and whatever the result might have been, it would have been differently motived and energised and based. But these men, asserting that organisation must be the product of life, nevertheless made organisation to be the product of life only at one remove : they interposed, between the spiritual relation and its working out in organisation, with a dogmatic assertion of what the product was to be : the resulting organisation, in consequence—even taking it at its best—came to be such as would obtain *if the inner life had made it*, without being actually the inner life's own making ; and witness to the Nonconformist spirit, therefore, though true as far as it went, was not adequately borne.   The thing became imitative—imitative of New Testament patterns so far as the constructors understood these, it is true—but imitative none the less.   And in reality this, as previously said, brought back the procedure which the Independents themselves had charged with wrong.   Moreover, the method, thus flawed, supplied but small guarantee for the perpetuation in its purity of that measure of the Nonconformist spirit it really embodied ; for once the mind created the system, instead of accepting it as something created before its eyes by another and greater power, intellectual formulations were bound to claim authority, and yet, being new, did not wear the look of authority which the older formulations carried ; and so was the prospect for historic Nonconformity over-shadowed by the clouds of possible bitterness and dispute. That the clouds have many times gathered and broken is not to be denied ; and one is scarcely surprised that Neal should say, " This scheme of the Brownists seems to be formed upon the practice of the apostolical churches, before the gifts of inspiration and prophecy were ceased, and is therefore hardly practicable in these latter ages, when the infirmities and passions of private persons too often take place of their

gifts and graces." [1] But it was precisely because the early
Nonconformity was thus, as Neal suggests, imitative—because
it was forgotten how essential an element it is in the Non-
conformist idea that inspiration in the sense of an energising
and creative life within the soul of man has *not* really ceased
—that Nonconformity's failures and stumblings have come.
At bottom, the fault was really a theological one ; and with
early Nonconformity, as with Nonconformity in later years
(and not with Nonconformity alone, though in the case of
Nonconformity it is all the sadder inasmuch as the thing
implies a contradiction of Nonconformity's own guiding
spirit and ideal) theology lacked the touch of mysticism
which would have made it possible for life to obtain all
its rights. Too seldom has Nonconformist ecclesiastical
construction founded itself upon such a conception of a
spiritual life, springing from and maintained by Christ
Himself in the lives of those who make His Church, as was
entertained in the nineteenth century by Dr. Dale. And
even when (as in the Quakerism at which we shall presently
glance) the touch of mysticism was felt, other obstacles were
flung in the way of a full exemplification of the Nonconformist
spirit working itself out into an ordered Church ; so that for
a manifesting of life and ecclesiastical construction in their
ideal relations, as two parts of a perfectly-articulated whole,
the world has still to wait. Of these early Independents, at
any rate, one has to say—while giving them all honour and
praise for the work they accomplished and for the courage
of their battle with ruthlessly hostile foes—that it was but a
partial embodiment of the Nonconformist spirit they revealed.
They had not reached, for instance, to the level of that earlier
Wicliffism which, sweeping the world clear of all that was,
sought to see the construction of all things begin again, both
theoretically and practically, from the central point of a
freshly-constituted relation between God and man. This
was all implied, of course, in the initial principle which the
first Independents professed to have received ; but they read
the implications too hastily, and did not read them all. And
the historian, enquiring how during the course of centuries
the Nonconformist spirit has fared, must note these things

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[1] *History of the Puritans*, i. 305.

when he seeks to determine early Independency's value and place.

Nevertheless, this early Independency was a great thing, and one cannot but be surprised that some even among modern authors are still content to gird at it and to fling at it terms of depreciation and slight. That the ecclesiastical writers of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, engaged as they were in the immediate battle against it, and under so hot a flush of anger at what seemed to them an impudent attack—that these should seize eagerly upon the weapon of contempt is only what might be looked for. It was only natural that those who defended the great Church of England—a Church possessing, besides the prestige attaching to it in that it *was* the Church of England, the recently-won halo of a triumphant self-reform which, in the eyes of the Church's adherents, had purged the Church from every taint of dross—it was but natural that they should look upon Independency as a mean and paltry thing. And certainly the sword of contempt, in the hands of controversialists of the established Church, flashed upon all parts of the field—often crossing, it must be confessed, with similarly-tempered blades wielded by the hands of controversialists on the other side. No epithet was spared : abuse levelled at the " Brownists " was held as sanctified by the use to which it was put ; and the world was ranged for analogies which, as they were brushed roughly across the despised sects, might serve to leave some odium behind. Mr. J. O. W. Haweis says that the Brownists were on the whole less severely handled in the controversy than might have been expected.[1] So far as pulpit declamation is concerned, the case may have been so ; but one has only to read the titles of the books published against the Independents to see how freely venom was spat forth.[2] To the apologists of the established order, the Separatists were as publicans and heathen men. Still, all this was, as has been said, in a way in the natural order of things. It is the modern writers who, when they take a similar line, excite our surprise.

[1] *Sketches of the Reformation and the Elizabethan Age*, p. 204.
[2] A glance through the Bibliography at the end of Dr. Dexter's *The Congregationalism of the Last Three Hundred Years* will light upon many of them.

And apart from anything like actual abuse, efforts to belittle the movement are scarcely less surprising. When one historian thinks it fitting and sufficient to say, by way of description, that "probably never in the history of human opinion have so many wild doctrines been broached, and so many strange practices set on foot, as by these expatriated Brownists and Barrowists in their sojourn among the Dutch" [1]—we can only wonder at such marvellous failure of the historic sense. For to make out that this was a small battle—to look upon Robert Browne and the subsequent Independent pioneers as meticulous sticklers for unimportant punctilio—to treat the movement as an insignificant ripple upon the historic sea—is, on the part of men professing faith in an evolution which through the ages makes its way, a blindness that is amazing indeed. By common consent this Elizabethan age was an age wherein the spirit of man cast off many of its trammels and strained to be free. It was an age wherein life, stretching itself for new movements, grew speedier, more athletic, more alert—and this in all its spheres. If now we look for the manifestation of this tendency in the religious sphere, where is it to be found? Not in those who were obstinately bent upon maintaining the *status quo*, and who, because reform had come thus far, declared that a final halt must now be called. It was in the Independents, not in their opponents, that evolution was delving for itself a channel through which the stream of enlarging life might run. Barrow and Greenwood lay in their prison at the time when the Spanish Armada was swept in confusion from the seas; and the spirit which on the side of national life throbbed in the breasts of the men who overthrew the Armada was the spirit which, on the religious side, was seeking an outlet and manifestation for itself in the captives in the Clink. Had Bacon only been able to see it, that inward pressure of the mind which forced him to the fashioning of new instruments and methods of

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[1] G. G. Perry, *A History of the English Church from the Accession of Henry VIII. to the Silencing of Convocation in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 337. It must be added that sometimes writers show great carelessness as to quite easily ascertainable facts. For instance, one author remarks that Barrow had been before his imprisonment "the leader of an exile Church in Amsterdam"! (Gee, *The Reformation Period*, p. 255).

thought was very close akin to that inward pressure which impelled upon novel religious lines the religious sectaries whom in his proud sense of superiority he despised : their attitude of mind, at any rate, was much more nearly allied to his than was the *non possumus* attitude of the ecclesiastical authorities of his day.   Milton's birth fell in 1608, the year in which the Independent company from Scrooby departed to Holland ; and there is nothing extravagant in looking upon both incidents as marking steps (on different tracks of the same mountain, as it were, and by different companies of the same army) of the campaign in which the spirit of progress was engaged.   The year 1616—the year of the establishment of Henry Jacob's Southwark Church—was the year in which Shakespeare died ; and it is not mere fancifulness to declare that the lines of vision passing through the two events reach at last to the common background of an evolutionary movement to which each in its own way belongs.   It was in Independency that the spirit of the time found its expression on the religious side.   Moreover, Independency's first protagonists, it is worth while to note, were men of intellect and culture, and not at all the mentally unequipped minds that they are so often assumed, if not asserted, to have been.   Practically all the leaders whose names have come before us in this chapter were University men : to Ainsworth belongs the additional distinction of being a Hebrew scholar of quite exceptional rank ; and, although it is principally as ecclesiastical controversialists that all these men stand now before our sight, their education had gone all round the circle, and had been far from leaving them men of one idea.   In fine, it is in this early Independency, and not in the Church which sought to stifle it, that the broadening and enlarging spirit of the Elizabethan age, on its religious side, is to be found.   And the modern evolutionary historian ought to have eyes to see that the fact is so.   In these men, whom he too often patronises with a sort of half-restrained scorn in the patronage, there lie the instances and illustrations of the very case he seeks to prove.   For in the last resort, the Nonconformist spirit, exalting life above organisation, is the spirit in whose existence evolution and progress find their guarantee ; and,

if the early Independents did not manifest the Nonconformist spirit in its perfect purity, their witness to it was true so far as it went.   A just verdict must affirm, in the end, that the Independent   movement   represented   both   intellect   and spirituality shaking themselves free from bonds.

SECTION 3

Nonconformity within the Church

AUTHORITIES.—For the earlier portion of the period the books mentioned for Section I hold good.   And most of them (Strype, Collier, Fuller and Frere) come much further down.   Collier and Fuller indeed come all the way. W. H. Hutton's *English Church from the Accession of Charles the First to the Death of Anne* takes up the story where Frere sets it down, though with much less insight and fulness of treatment.   To Strype's other books his *Life of Whitgift* should be added, although, as noted more than once in the text, Strype's dates need constant watching.   Sir H. Paule's *Life of Whitgift* should be added to Strype's, as giving the view of a strong Whitgift partisan.   For much information concerning the early Presbyterian movement we depend, un- fortunately, upon the witness of foes.   Bancroft's books, quoted in the course of the Section, and Heylin's *Aerius redivivus* are indispensable, notwithstanding their bitterness.   The story of the entire Puritan movement is told with fulness in Neal's *History of the Puritans*, a valuable mine, although Neal is almost as biassed towards the Puritan side as Bancroft and Heylin are against it.   A moderate and fair recital of events, so far as Elizabeth's reign is concerned, is to be found in Soames' *Elizabethan Religious History*, the stand-point being Anglican, while for Elizabeth's later years and for the Primacy of Bancroft a recently-published American book, Usher's *Reconstruction of the English Church*, is of the highest value.   The story of Nonconformity within the English Church is told with a strictly Presbyterian outlook in Drysdale's *History of the Presby- terians in England*, and in a far inferior fashion by T. M'Crie in his *Annals of English Presbytery*.   It must be borne in mind that nearly all authors, ancient and modern, fail to apprehend adequately the distinction between Puritanism and Presbyterianism, and in the case of some of them—Drysdale, for instance—this makes it impossible to catch the true spirit of the time from their pages, however reliable they may be as to facts.   Of modern general histories, Gardiner's work, which comes into our hands at the accession of James, is easily first.

Allusion has more than once been made to the fact that there was, in Elizabeth's time and afterwards, a Non- conformist movement within the Church of England as well as a Nonconformist movement without ; and it is at this internal Nonconformity that we are now to look.   Beginning when Elizabeth's manipulation of ecclesiastical affairs began, having its primary cause in the fact that from the outset Elizabeth's manipulation of ecclesiastical affairs promised to be less thorough and decisive in the way of reformation

than some desired, becoming more accentuated as Elizabeth's purposes grew clearer to the deepening of the extremer reformers' distrust, and not surrendering even when 1571 put the final touches to the system which had been gradually built up, this Nonconformist movement maintained itself with varying fortune up to the year 1662, when the pressure brought to bear upon it drove it finally from the ranks.   There were, of course, subsequent Nonconformist movements inside the Established Church, and more than once the spirit of revolt stirred from its sleep ; but these subsequent movements never attained to the magnitude of the first, and were perhaps overshadowed throughout by remembrance of the failure of the first and by the sense of hopelessness which that remembrance would be sure to create.   Even the great Methodist revival of later times (as we now can see) was doomed from its beginning either to remain within the Church and die or, if it would keep its power, to go forth as an exile from its birth-place and its home.   The great struggle of Nonconformity within the Church—the struggle which demonstrated once for all how uncompromising was the Church's rigidity and how impatient of anything like spontaneity the Church was determined to be—was the struggle carried on from Elizabeth's reign to the expulsion of the recalcitrant clergy in 1662.   In this section, however, we do not follow its course so far as the last-named date.   For our present purpose we fix the limit, as we fixed it in the case of the rise of the Independents, at the year 1630, tracing the course of internal Nonconformity as it ran parallel with that of external Nonconformity up to that time.   For that date also—though less markedly than 1662—was a critical and outstanding date in the history of Nonconformity within the English Church.

It is necessary to understand, however, that within the Nonconformist movement we are now studying more than one element was contained, and, moreover, that its different elements, at any rate in their more pronounced manifesta-tions, showed neither any inclination to blend nor any capability of blending.   The term " Puritanism " is very commonly employed to designate all the non-conforming religious life of this period, whether it was within or without

the Established Church that it maintained itself; yet this
non-conforming religious life was of very varying kinds, each
kind looking along its own particular lines of sight and
basing itself upon its own particular foundations; so that
any attempt to cover the whole thing by a single title can
only result in smothering all the essential features underneath
an impenetrable veil. A label so general as to be applicable
to all the Nonconformities of the time comes in the end, by
reason of its very generality, to be descriptive of none.
Undoubtedly all Nonconformity was " Puritan " in that every
type of Nonconformity sought to " purify " the Church
according to its ideal of what Church purity was; but ideals
were not with every type of Nonconformity the same.
Though we may start by designating the entire Noncon-
formist movement, inside and outside the Established Church,
by the name of Puritanism, we have next, if we wish for a
real comprehension of the position, to disentangle the
various strands of an interwoven cord.

The "Independent" strand we have disentangled already;
and the distinctiveness of Nonconformity outside the Church
of England—how this Nonconformity was Puritan and more
than Puritan—has already been made clear. But in regard
to Nonconformity within the Church of England, the
disentangling still remains to do. And in this part of the
Nonconformist " cord " we find two well-marked " strands."
Or, to change the figure, in this internal Nonconformist
movement a dividing line runs down between two parties
thus. On one side of the line stands a party which, accept-
ing in its main outlines the reformed settlement of the
English Church, holding that the existing episcopal doctrine
and method of Church government with its adjuncts was
right and wise and valid, thought that the settlement had
been too timorously wrought, and, for emphatically spiritual
reasons, desired the removal of unreformed survivals which,
as it believed, hindered the Church's spiritual ministry to its
own members and the Church's spiritual impression upon
the world. On the other side of the line stands another
party which, so far from accepting the reformed settlement,
held it to be no real Reformation at all, and clamoured for
the setting up of those Presbyterian methods and that

Presbyterian discipline which are associated with the name of Calvin, and which the adherents of the party, or its founders, in their days of exile in Queen Mary's persecuting reign, had learnt to admire abroad. It was for a particular form of Church order, above all things, that this party stood. The aims and spirit of the two indicated sections, and the justification of the description given, will become clearer as we presently trace out the tale : for the moment, the general characterisation of each demands to be grasped. Nonconformity within the Church contained on the one hand a section which was " Puritan " in the true sense of the word, and which—while faithful to the reformed settlement with its Episcopacy—was bent on a purified Church life and a purified Church witness within the limits which that settlement had fixed ; and on the other hand a section which chiefly wanted—though it wanted this one thing with a passion that was fiery and bigoted indeed—to substitute for the national Church as it existed a national Church wherein government by the presbytery should have superseded government by the episcopal bench. It would be well if the title of " Puritan " were reserved for the section to which it properly belongs—the section first named ; for then, taking Nonconformity as a whole, Nonconformity both inside and outside the Established Church, we should have this strictly " Puritan " party so to say at the centre, the Independents (something more than Puritan) on the one side, and the Presbyterians (who may without injustice be called something less than Puritan) on the other. The facts of the case certainly demand a discrimination, as between Puritanism and Presbyterianism, made something after this way. The statement sometimes put forward that all the early Puritans were Presbyterians,[1] with its implication that the two names may be interchangeably employed, cannot stand. Doubtless there were places along the boundary line at which the two

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[1] See, for instance, J. Heron, *A Short History of Puritanism*, p. 23. And even where no such definite statement is made, the identification is usually taken for granted. Nor is it enough to take the Presbyterian movement of Elizabeth's time as losing its first strenuousness and giving place to a milder Puritanism (so Shaw, *English Historical Review*, iii. 655-667). The two movements ran side by side from the beginning. It may be as well to add that nothing said of the earlier Presbyterianism has any bearing upon the Presbyterianism of to-day.

parties overflowed, as it were, into one another's territory :
some of those in the more strictly Puritan party may have
been less closely bound to episcopal theories than the rest,
may have had no active dislike to Presbyterianism as such
or may even have had some leaning towards it ; and
conversely, some of the more strictly Presbyterian party may
have been actuated by much of the essentially Puritan
spirit mingling with their governmental ideals. As to this
latter point, Richard Baxter is a classic instance ; for,
Presbyterian as he was, he was much less a Presbyterian
than a saint. But when we survey the situation as a whole,
the boundary line stands clear, although here and there
individuals may seem to cross and re-cross it or to be
standing with foot planted on either side. And it is with
the distinction between the two sections of the Noncon-
formity which at this period worked within the English
Church—it is with that distinction borne in mind that many
of the statements made by various writers concerning
Puritanism need to be approached ; for statements made of
Puritanism as a whole are sometimes true of only one of
the sections usually considered to be covered by the name.
When, for example, Dr. Plummer remarks that the " Puritan
would have seen the English Church go to pieces with
ready complacency," [1] he says what is indeed true of many
of the Presbyterians, but what by no means applies to the
Puritan properly so termed ; and this simple instance may
suffice to show how failure to realise the existence of the
two parties may result in generalisations which mislead.
For our present purpose, then, the reservation of the
" Puritan " title already advocated will be made. Let it be
emphasised once again that for any proper understanding
of things the distinction between the two parties of
" internal " Nonconformity needs to be clearly drawn, and
that Puritanism and Presbyterianism are very far from being
one and the same. The admitted fact that some of the
Puritans had Presbyterian leanings, and that some of the
Presbyterians possessed a measure of the Puritan spirit,
certainly complicates the case to a degree. But each party
had its own distinctive note. And the mind may, with a

[1] *The Church of England in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 156.

little effort, easily picture the situation—a Puritan party in which a few members, and only a few, looked, as to a possibility whose realisation might be preferable, but could not be indispensable, to Presbyterianism ; and a Presbyterian party with which, bent on saintliness as some of its adherents were, the organisation of the Church on Presbyterian lines was the paramount concern.

It is the more necessary to carry the distinction in mind because it is impossible otherwise to give an adequate reply to a question which is bound to arise. Of Nonconformity within the Church we have to enquire, as we enquired of Independency without the Church—how far does it manifest the true Nonconformist spirit, the spirit which declares that not organisation but life is the supreme and primary concern ? Only when we remember that Puritanism and Presbyterianism are by no means interchangeable terms are we in possession of the material for a satisfactory answer ; for the satisfactory and correct answer is this—that Puritanism in the stricter sense was, and that Presbyterianism in the stricter sense was not, an effort at the realisation of the true Nonconformist ideal. The latter part of this statement does not mean, of course, that the Puritan spirit—and therefore the Nonconformist spirit so far as Puritanism embodies it—was not to be found in many who advocated the Presbyterian forms : it has already been allowed that the boundary line between the two parties becomes at many places wavering and indistinct. But what is meant is that in an advocacy of Presbyterianism *for its own sake* (and not a few so advocated it) nothing of the Nonconformist spirit is to be found. The stricter Presbyterians contended on behalf of organisation, no less than did the authorities of the Established Church, or Elizabeth's government, or Elizabeth herself : it was simply the substitution of one form of government for another whereon their minds and hearts were so steadfastly set. But Puritanism, in the sense we have allotted to the term, the Puritan party properly so called, was an embodiment—certainly partial and imperfect, more partial and imperfect, it has to be confessed, than the embodiment offered in the Independency at which we have glanced, but a real embodiment nevertheless—of the spirit which looks on

organisation as subsidiary to life. It was from distinctly
spiritual ideals that Puritanism started : it was for the inner
life of holiness that it passionately cared : its ardour was
spiritual, not ecclesiastical : it was the life-blood it sought to
purify, not merely the framework of bone and sinew that it
sought correctly to build up. How true this is we shall
better appreciate as we presently catch the Puritan spirit
and grow accustomed to the Puritan note ; and we shall
see that even when Puritanism was protesting against robes
of particular colour and shape, against excess of ceremonies,
or against the perpetuation of certain Roman Catholic
modes and manners which might seem comparatively
unimportant in themselves, the protest had in it nothing
small or mean, but was as it were the shoreward wave of
a deep and throbbing spiritual sea. Definite statements
from recorded Puritan speech are not lacking to bear this
out ; but it is the whole Puritan atmosphere, as it comes
clinging round about us, that witnesses in the strongest and
most decisive way. For the moment, let the testimony of
a not too friendly writer [1] suffice concerning the utter
spirituality of the Puritan temper and ideal. The Puritan
ideal, as the author alluded to characterises it, was holiness
in the sense of " goodness in itself," perfectness, rather than
holiness in the sense of consecration ; and while (he goes
on) the former conception leads to Puritanism, the latter
leads to Churchmanship. One parts company with this
same writer, it is true, when he further asserts that the
former or Puritan conception of holiness lays the chief stress
on man's part in religion, the latter on what God has done
for us. But his declaration that Puritanism was identified
with the conception of " goodness in itself," or perfectness,
and that this is not the conception which issues in taking
" Churchmanship " for the chief concern, may be unhesitat-
ingly accepted ; for this is, in effect, a declaration that
Puritanism exalted life above organisation ; and it thus
becomes in reality, although put forward as a declaration
conveying a hostile criticism, a declaration which turns to
Puritanism's praise. And the sum of it all is, once more,
that while Presbyterianism in the stricter sense was no

[1] W. E. Collins, *The English Reformation and its Consequences*, pp. 106-109.

manifestation of the true Nonconformist spirit, in Puritanism
as the term is here employed, the true Nonconformist spirit
was at least partially displayed.

The year 1630 has been adopted as the limit to which in
this section our survey of the Nonconformist movement within
the Church of England is to be carried.   It may be well,
however, if in a few sentences some indication is given as
to the course of the movement beyond that date, so that
while we are tracing the two lines of "internal Noncon-
formity"—Puritanism and Presbyterianism—through the
period terminating in 1630, we may also keep a sort of
sub-consciousness as to how one of these lines runs on past
that period to a later ending.   It was in 1662, as has been
observed, that Nonconformity was finally driven from the
ranks of the English Church.   The internal Nonconformist
movement, taken as a whole, ended then.   But the earlier
date—1630—is the date at which Puritanism in the stricter
sense was compelled to acknowledge, or at least to foresee,
its own defeat.   Not that so far as Puritanism itself, or its
influence in the nation as a whole, are concerned, there was
death or decline : as a matter of fact, the story, even after
the year named, is one of growth and advance ; but it was
in 1630 that Puritanism began to realise how it must
relinquish its precarious grip upon the slippery edge to
which it had hitherto clung, how within the Church of
England it could have neither part nor lot.   True, a certain
number of Puritans, as distinguished from Presbyterians, are
found in the Church of England to a later date ; but
Puritanism within the Church had received and bowed to
its sentence of death.   Thenceforward it increasingly sought
its life and fortune elsewhere—passing to America to leaven
the new nation there, or, if it stayed at home, identifying
itself with that Nonconformity outside the Established
Church which it had previously opposed and even despised.
Authority had become too strong for it ; and authority at
last cast it forth from the Eden which it loved, setting at
the gates a flaming sword which forbade return.   Presby-
terianism within the Church, on the other hand, had a
longer history.   Its first fiery outburst—the outburst in
which it uttered itself from the lips of Cartwright and his

friends—did indeed speedily die down. Yet it never admitted defeat, nor (except in individual instances) stood forth with penitential mien. It might, in Elizabeth's reign, owing to the impossibility of wearing its colours in the open with any prospect of winning favour or even countenance for them, be driven beneath the surface to scheme and plan there. In the reign of James and the early part of the reign of Charles, it might sink its own individuality for a while for the sake of a better chance later on, and, actuated by the dislike which in common with Puritanism it felt for the existing system, make common cause with Puritanism in many a protest—mingling with Puritanism, as it were, for the occasion, and having the Presbyterian reality underneath the Puritan garb and speech. All these things, in fact, did take place. Nevertheless Presbyterianism retained throughout its essential spirit and all its essential ideals : if it became sometimes more or less quiescent, it always preserved its place ; and later on, when at the time of the Civil War and the Commonwealth the entire ecclesiastical arrangement was thrown into the melting pot and temporarily re-cast in new shape, it found its new chance. For a little while it was actually supreme. The establishment of Presbyterianism was, through a brief chapter of the national religious life, an accomplished fact. Then, under Cromwell's settlement, although its actual supremacy was gone, Presbyterianism kept still its equal rights with other systems, its equal place beside them : in the Protector's Broad Church policy, so to call it, it could of course find, though not exclusive power, at any rate ample room. And then at the Restoration, when a good deal more than the Stuart dynasty was restored, when the ecclesiastical system against which Puritanism and Presbyterianism had alike protested was re-formed in its old austerity, Presbyterianism's hour of final failure struck. In 1662 it had to follow Puritanism into exile, and go out from the jealously-guarded doors of the English Church, its departure bringing the story of Nonconformity within the Established Church—or at least one important chapter of it—at last to its close. All this we shall see in fuller detail by-and-by. What we already see, concerning the two lines of internal Nonconformity

which we have to draw, is the Puritan "line" cut off, or at least lapsing into ever more marked faintness of tracing with accelerating speed, after 1630 (with which year the present section ends) and the Presbyterian "line" stretching on to 1662, in which year Presbyterianism in turn met its doom, the Nonconformist movement, already mutilated by Puritanism's loss, dying finally when Presbyterianism died.

So much of general description and anticipation seemed advisable for a clear comprehension of the facts now to be set down.   It is sometimes wise for historical study (since it has the power of doing so), when it plants itself in any particular realm of the past, thus turning that realm into its temporary present, to take the prophet's advantage of knowing in some measure what the future is going to be.   We turn now to the actual story of Nonconformity within the English Church.

It was—as might, indeed, be expected—almost simultaneously with the final settlement of Church affairs that both Puritanism and Presbyterianism emerge into view, each with a definitely formulated programme in its hands.   The year 1571, we have seen, was the year in which the Church settlement came to completeness ; and it was in that year that Puritanism drew up what is known as the "Northampton Model," while it was in the previous year that Thomas Cartwright commenced at Cambridge his propaganda on behalf of the Presbyterian "discipline,"—the propaganda so soon to materialise in the "Admonition to Parliament" of 1572.   Up to this period, we may take it, the two elements had been mingled in a general Nonconformity which had not fully taken its bearings and which was only feeling its way.   It is at the time mentioned that the two "lines" disentangle themselves and drop apart, and that one begins to see how within the general body of internal Nonconformity the two parties must have existed, and how in the minds of some of those constituting it the Puritan ideal, in the minds of others the Presbyterian ideal, must have been present all the while.   Indeed it is, speaking generally, as Puritanism rather than as Presbyterianism that Nonconformity within the Church of England presents itself and makes its impression upon the observer during Elizabeth's earlier

years : the Presbyterian voices only whispered, and were drowned in Puritanism's louder cry. Only at the climax of the " hardening " process which Elizabeth carried on was each of the Nonconformist elements forced distinctly to assert itself, to understand itself, to exchange its hitherto more or less inarticulate murmurings for clear-cut speech, to enunciate its scheme of definitely thought-out demands. Previous to that climax, the Presbyterian voice, though not silent, gave only occasional prophetic indications of the fulness and strength which it was afterwards to attain.

Scanning the years from 1558 to 1571—the years before either Presbyterianism or Puritanism had fully found itself—we note that from the very beginning the minds of some were struck with an apprehension that the reformation of the English Church was not going to be as thorough as it ought. The earliest mutterings of discontent are, indeed, difficult to identify ; but it is certain that many of the exiles who on Elizabeth's accession returned from abroad brought with them a spirit which, because it remembered with satisfaction the simplicity of the worship and of the ecclesiastical order with which it had in foreign parts been associated, would look with anything but satisfaction upon the halting and temporising measures which now in England it was required to accept and to obey. The returned exiles were not, it is true, all of one mind. Even during their residence abroad they had by no means lived in peace : at Frankfort more particularly the temperature had gone up many degrees in consequence of dissensions as to the true method of worship and other kindred matters ; [1] and speaking generally we may say that while some had imbibed no more than a distaste for any ritual which leant towards the complicated and ornate, others had come sufficiently under Calvin's spell to be enamoured of the actual Presbyterian constitution which was Calvin's own. (This distinction, in fact, roughly corresponds with, and perhaps accounts for, the distinction between Puritanism and Presbyterianism as it was subsequently developed in ecclesiastical affairs at

[1] See *A Brief Discourse of the Troubles at Frankfort*, attributed to William Whittingham. There are many reprints of this, Professor Edward Arber's being perhaps one of the best.

home.)   And the spirit of controversy which had been born
abroad was transported to England when the exiles came
back ; for Jewel writes to Peter Martyr at Strasburg that
after hearing a sermon of Bentham's (Bentham had been an
exile himself, but had come home before Mary's death to
risk his life in ministering to Protestant stalwarts) the
congregation of repatriated wanderers " began to dispute
among themselves about ceremonies, some declaring for
Geneva, and some for Frankfort."[1]   Differences of degree
in the discontent which half-measures of reform excited,
and differences of opinion as to the counter-measures whereby
they should be met, existed, it is clear, from the first.   But
that the discontent was very real and very active is equally
clear.   We have already noted how by 1561 Elizabeth
recognised that the Act of Supremacy, the Act of Uniformity,
and the " Injunctions," had failed to produce that perfect
conformity on which her heart was set—how, notwithstand-
ing the " Interpretations and Considerations " which in that
year Archbishop Parker, moved by the Queen's anger, issued,
disorder still maintained its hold—and how in 1563 the
second Act of Supremacy threatened heavier penalties than
ever against those who persisted in kicking against the
pricks.[2]   Throughout these early years Puritanism was
diffused more or less widely ; and objection to the Romanistic
survivals retained in the new order raised many voices,
voices often petulant rather than dignified, but at any rate
voices which obstinately refused to be put down.   In
Worcester Cathedral itself disobedience to authority, driven
by a zeal which was certainly not according to knowledge,
went so far as to destroy church plate and ornaments, and
to break up the material of the organ into bedsteads and
dishes for the clergy's wives.[3]   It has been stated before
that even upon some of the occupants of the episcopal
bench there was a Puritan tinge.   We have seen Sandys
of Worcester attempting, in the Convocation of 1563, to
give something of Puritan tone to the services of the
Establishment ;[4] and at an earlier stage he had complained

[1] *Zurich Letters*, edited for the Parker Society by Rev. Hastings Robinson,
D.D., i. 8.   [2] *Supra*, p. 166.
[3] *State Papers, Domestic Series, Elizabeth*, xxviii. 35.
[4] *Supra*, p. 167.

of the "popish vestments," the copes, which "remain in our church."[1] Jewel, the famous protagonist of Protestantism in Elizabeth's reign, had about the same time (though this was just before his consecration) expressed his wish for power to abolish "theatrical habits" and "comical dress."[2] And though a continuance of episcopal Puritanism was in the nature of things impossible—since under Elizabeth the bishop must either conform, and himself force others to conform, or go—so that some who had been adherents of Puritanism at first subsequently forsook it and fled, we have seen something of its spirit lingering still in the comparative leniency with which Grindal, in 1567, treated the delinquents of Plumbers' Hall.

But it was not, and could not be, by the Bishops that this fight was maintained. Of episcopal Puritan leanings— at least of any open expression of them—the second Act of Supremacy, passed in 1563, and the Convocation of the same date, practically saw the end. Yet it was immediately after the last Puritan chance in the highest places of the Church had died that the true Puritanism, standing clear from whatever of mere disorder had been associated with it until now, lifted up its clear and ringing call as Laurence Humphrey and Thomas Sampson came upon the scene. These men revived and intensified the Puritan spirit which Hooper, in the time of Edward the Sixth, had been the first to show.[3] Humphrey was President of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Sampson Dean of Christ Church, both of them being men of learning, skilled in debate, and of a fine Christian temper. Each of them, in his respective office, declined to conform to the appointed order in the matter of clerical dress ; and, even though Bullinger, like some other foreign advisers, counselled less scrupulosity in order that greater evils might not befall,[4] each held his ground. Archbishop Parker, conscious that his royal

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[1] *Zurich Letters*, edited for the Parker Society by Rev. Hastings Robinson, D.D., i. 74.

[2] *Ibid.* i. 52.   [3] *Supra*, p. 138.

[4] Humphrey wrote to Bullinger for advice in August of 1563. (*Zurich Letters*, edited for the Parker Society by Rev. Hastings Robinson, D.D., i. 133, 134.) There was further correspondence both with Zurich and Geneva ; and in 1566 Humphrey and Sampson sent a joint letter to Bullinger summing up their views (*ibid.* i. 157-163).

mistress was looking to him to put a stop to such things as these, and would make no distinction between merely factious disobedience and the conscientious opposition of men like Humphrey and Sampson, was at last constrained to intervene, and entered the lists in 1564—though still as it were striking the shields of the Puritan champions only with the butt end of his spear. A paper of questions sent by Parker to the two defaulters, replies duly returned by them to the Archbishop, and the Archbishop's replies to their replies, make up the first act.[1] So far there was no lack of friendliness, no trace of sharpness from either side. But when the Queen's reprimand of 1565 had stung him,[2] and the " Book of Articles " was in process of being drawn up, Parker passed into sterner mood. He summoned Humphrey and Sampson before himself and the other Commissioners in March, summoned them again in April, and at the second interview abruptly bade them either fall into line or else surrender their posts.[3] Both chose the harder way, and deprivation was duly carried out. Neither, however, it should be noted, left or was cast out of the Church of England. Indeed, it must in fairness be stated that Parker, having done his duty as he read it, did his best, as subsequent correspondence between himself and Sampson shows,[4] to make things easier for the Dean : whether there was anything at all in the nature of even temporary confinement for him remains, in face of that correspondence, a matter of doubt, and if there was, it was of the mildest kind ; and Sampson, though remaining staunchly Puritan to his life's end, afterwards obtained a readership in divinity at Whittington College in London, also becoming Master of Wigston Hospital at Leicester and Prebendary of St. Paul's.[5] Humphrey was still more

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[1] Strype, *Life of Parker* (ed. 1821), i. 329-333.   [2] *Supra*, p. 167.

[3] *Parker Correspondence*, pp. 234, 240.

[4] *Ibid.* pp. 234, 244. Between the letters stands one from Parker to Cecil, pleading for leniency to be shown to Sampson.

[5] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), I. ii. 150 ; Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses* (ed. Bliss), i. 550 ; C. H. & T. Cooper's *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, ii. 43. Neal's statement as to Sampson's case (*History of the Puritans*, i. 170), to the effect that he never obtained any higher preferment than the government of a poor hospital, is entirely misleading. Dixon adds, though not giving his authority, that Sampson also became rector of Brightlingsea, Essex (*History of the Church of England*, vi. 64 note).

fortunate. Certainly he was not imprisoned. And in the sequel he became more complacent, and conformed at least sufficiently to wear the previously - denounced vestments while officiating as Dean first of Gloucester and then of Winchester—the former post being given to him by Cecil in 1576,[1] and the latter falling to him four years later on.[2]

The voice of the true Puritanism, it has been said, is raised in the protests which Humphrey and Sampson made. For it cannot be too strenuously insisted that though the immediate concern of the controversy was with such things as surplices, tippets, copes, and gowns, the Puritan objection had behind it a passion for spiritual ideals. It is not denied that the policy pursued by many of the ecclesiastical authorities had a similar and an equal passion behind it : in fact, the comparative smallness (unless, indeed, we are prepared to attach the leaders of every party for mere love of strife) of the ostensible cause of quarrel is enough to show that there must have been more than these superficially apparent matters at stake. But one must do justice to both sides. If it was for the sake of religion that many of the authorities of the Church (in saying this the Queen herself is left out of account) pressed the claim of organisation, it was equally for the sake of religion that Humphrey and Sampson resisted the claim. This is, indeed, clearly in-dicated by the fact that the objection of the two men—at any rate at first, although it was natural that in the stress of continued controversy the character of the discussion, specially as carried on by their followers, should become accentuated as to its tone and more stringently restricted as to the line on which it ran—was not so much to the vestments themselves as to the forcing them upon unwilling wearers. The position was this—Sampson and Humphrey held the vestments to be fraught with danger to real piety ; therefore they at least ought not to be constrained to the wearing of them, whatever others might do. " Because you think not this, you are not to be condemned by us : because we think this, we are not to be troubled by you." So did

[1] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), II. ii. 65.
[2] Le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (ed. Hardy), iii. 22. Le Neve (*ibid.* i. 443) erroneously gives 1570 as the date of Humphrey's installation as Dean of Gloucester.

Sampson and Humphrey write to the Ecclesiastical Com-
missioners in March of 1565.[1] But it was precisely this
holding of the matter as intrinsically indifferent that Parker
could not endure ; and the dispute thus defines itself before
our eyes as the old one between organisation valued for
its own sake and the making of organisation subordinate
to life. To Humphrey and Sampson the prescribed robes
were too intimately connected with the religion of Rome
to be harmless if adopted by the English Church : they had
become the settled symbols of a settled system, and could
not be separated from the thing they had symbolised for
so long ; and the fear was lest the mass of the people, with
that which spoke of Rome before their eyes, should fail to
realise that although the garments of Rome were retained,
the doctrines of Rome were banned. So might vital religion
come to be wounded in the house of its friends. These
things had been the " accompaniments of that which all
godly persons now abominated." [2] That was the key-note
of it all. It was religion, life, for which these men cared.
Similarly, in what they say as to the ministry, the spiritual
ideals by which they were possessed show clear. It was for
spiritual qualifications, not for mere conformity to an ordained
rule—for spiritual qualifications which would ensure for the
clergy's work a spiritual result — that they loudly called.
" They do daily make ministers or priests (as they are
called)," says Sampson, " which are as dumb, that they
neither can nor will speak anything in the congregation
where they be resident, more than they are compelled to
read out of a printed book." And the Bishops, he complains,
look for nothing more than this. " Though they be so
much men as do want the gift, yet they do boldly seek
to have the place of teacher." While the pastors whom
the Lord desires—he goes on—" are such as feed his people
with knowledge and understanding." Such pastors, also,
did the apostles, St. Paul among them, send out ; " that by
sound doctrine, they might convince the gainsayers, apt to
teach, rightly dividing the word of truth." [3] Very definitely

[1] Strype, *Life of Parker* (ed. 1821), iii. 96.
[2] Humphrey and Sampson to Bullinger. *Zurich Letters*, edited for the
Parker Society by Rev. Hastings Robinson, D.D., i. 158.
[3] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), III. i. 322, 323.

is the superior importance of life over organisation asserted
in a letter of Humphrey's upon the same theme. " Religion
requireth naked Christ to be preached, professed, and
glorified, that *graviora legis* by the faithful ministry of
feeding pastors should be furthered ; and after that go
by order tending to the edification, and not destruction
advanced." [1]   Of mere factiousness not a single trace is in
all this to be discerned : indeed, its existence as the driving
motive of opposition is negatived by the letter, and yet
more by the spirit, of it all.   It was on life, as exalted
above organisation, on religion in its innermost values, on
spiritual ideals, on holiness in the sense of " goodness in
itself," [2] on perfectness, that the thought and yearning of
Humphrey, Sampson and their coadjutors, were steadfastly
fixed.   Upon a just survey of the facts no other verdict
can be pronounced.

The condemnation of Humphrey and Sampson was by
no means the end of the Church's Puritanism.   It was
speedily proved, if it had ever been doubtful, that these two
men were but protagonists in a cause which many had
espoused.   By this time the Bishops might have conquered,
or at any rate disguised, their Puritan leanings ; but others
in the ranks of the clergy were made of sterner stuff.   Jewel
might conform.   Sandys might fall silent.   Grindal might,
though with manifest effort, bring himself to condemn men
with his lips for holding opinions which in his heart he
approved.   Still, even in the higher clerical orders there
were found some who refused to perform obsequiously and
mechanically all the movements of the appointed ecclesiastical
drill : the name of Turner, Dean of Bath and Wells, links
itself with the names of Humphrey and Sampson as showing
that Puritanism kept its advocates even among the superior
officials of the Church ; and that men of learning, as well as
men of ecclesiastical rank, were enlisted on the Puritan side
is proved by the fact that at Cambridge University Non-

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[1] *State Papers, Domestic Series, Elizabeth*, xxxvi. 64.   The letter is printed
in full by R. W. Dixon, *History of the Church of England*, vi. 61-63.   Canon
Dixon, however, erroneously supposes that the letter had not been printed before.
It appears in Ames' *A Fresh Suit against Human Ceremonies in God's Worship*
(ed. 1633), Part II. 268-272.

[2] W. E. Collins.   See *supra*, p. 213.

conformity was found to be strongly entrenched,[1] and that
Coverdale, the translator of the Bible, was one of those who
were recalcitrant under Archbishop Parker's disciplinary
hand. The general body of working clergy was—both by
common report and by the result of tests shortly applied—
markedly leavened by the Puritan taint. It should be said
that at first both Leicester, the Queen's favourite, and Cecil,
the Queen's minister, were generally supposed to look with
some favour upon Puritan ideas ; and it is quite possible
that consciousness of this may have induced some to main-
tain resistance longer than they would otherwise have done.
But it soon became clear that, whatever the private feelings
of Cecil and Leicester might be, those feelings were not
going to be translated into any effectual or active help.
And no ulterior motives, no secret hopes of any favourable
disposition which, now hidden in the breasts of the great,
might presently rouse itself to intercede for them—none of
these things can have influenced the body of men who in
1566 answered " No " when Parker put them to the final
test. We have seen how the " Book of Articles," under its
new title of the " Book of Advertisements," was issued in
that year,[2] marking the commencement of more stringent
dealing with disobedience on Parker's part. On the 26th
of March the Archbishop summoned the clergy of London
and Southwark before the Ecclesiastical Commissioners at
Lambeth and peremptorily required immediate obedience
to the Queen's commands in the matter of order, dress, and
the rest. No discussion was permitted. " Ye that will
presently subscribe, write *Volo*. Those that will not sub-
scribe, write *Nolo*. Be brief: make no words." It was,
indeed, a " Stand and deliver " policy, so emphatically
announced that the situation could not be mistaken for
anything but the crisis that it was.[3] The refusal of thirty-
seven brought upon them immediate suspension, together
with a warning that suspension would automatically become

[1] A petition against the enforcement of conformity was sent to Parker in 1565,
signed by Vice-Chancellor Beaumont and others. This speaks of a " multitude of
pious men " who would be lost to the University if strictness prevailed. Very
curiously, Whitgift, the future Archbishop, was one of the signatories (Strype's
Life of Parker, ed. 1821, i. 386 and iii. 125).   [2] *Supra*, p. 168.
[3] Strype, *Life of Grindal* (ed. 1821), pp. 144, 145.

deprivation if within three months submission were not made. The hearts of some did indeed sink within them before the expiry of the period of grace, and these lowered their arms. But the majority accepted the penalty, passing quietly from their places when the three months were gone by.   The Dean Turner previously mentioned was one on whom deprivation fell ;[1] and Coverdale, though he was not present at the Lambeth meeting, and though it is perhaps doubtful how far in his case compulsion would have been employed,[2] ranged himself beside his brethren, resigning before long the vicarage of St. Magnus, which was at this time in his hands.   The whole incident was testimony that Puritanism was a force which, though contrary forces might deflect it from the line on which it was working, was not going to be extinguished with ease.   And that the seceding ministers, like Sampson and Humphrey before them, were moved by no spirit of merely factious love of war, is shown in the paper of " reasons " which some of them handed in by way of justifying the stand they made.[3]   Had they yielded, they say, " we should beat back those that are coming from superstition, and confirm those that are grown in superstition, and consequently overthrow that which we have been labouring to build."

Between the ejectments of 1566 and the " Northampton Model " of 1571 there were abundant signs that Puritanism meant, spite of all discouragements, to make a stand.   Its chastisement at the hands of Parker and the Bishops might indeed be taken in more ways than one ; and the Plumbers' Hall assembly of 1567 stands as a token that in some cases Puritanism accepted its dismissal and began that drift into Separatism which became so accentuated by-and-by.[4]   But not a few were still resolved on making a fight for it within the Church's gates.   The expelled ministers straightway made the pen their sword, issuing " A Brief Discourse against

[1] The deprivation of Turner is sometimes placed earlier—either at the same time as that of Sampson and Humphrey, or at an earlier meeting of the London clergy which Parker is supposed to have called.   The dates are somewhat confused, but the reading of events given here (implying only one meeting of the clergy) may be taken as the most probable.

[2] He had been one of the officiating bishops at Parker's consecration.   He died in 1567.

[3] Given by Neal, *History of the Puritans*, i. 174-176.

[4] *Supra*, pp. 174, 175.

the outward apparel and ministering garments of the Popish
Church," [1] and, when Parker thought the pamphlet important
enough to take the field against it himself, refusing to let
him have the last word, and boldly answering him again. [2]
This weapon, however, was swiftly and sternly struck from
their hands.   Their presumption drew forth a Star Chamber
edict, forbidding under heavy penalties the issue of books
which should assail any of the Ordinances or Injunctions of
the Queen ; [3] so that, as they had lost their pulpits, they now
lost the press.   Yet, however silence might be compelled,
the leaven was at work.   Men in high places who were not
Puritan themselves felt that Puritanism must not be too
lightly esteemed, realised that the policy of suppression had
its dangers, and, not without a certain trace of sympathy with
the Puritan objectors if not with Puritanism itself, addressed
to Leicester or Cecil or Parker remonstrances against driving
severity too far. [4]   At Cambridge University, which we have
already noted as a stronghold of dissidence, open approval
of the Puritan protest was displayed. [5]   And there are signs
enough that in other parts of the country Puritanism was
keeping, and indeed actually strengthening, its grip.   It was
after all but the natural issue of things that Puritan feeling
should presently make an attempt at embodying itself, at
formulating itself, and should frame for itself some sort of
expression, definite as to time and order, of its own inmost
heart.

In the "Northampton Model" of 1571 [6] some such
expression was achieved.   The programme adopted (with
the connivance of the Bishop of the diocese and with the
approval of the authorities of the town) by the Puritans of
Northampton embraced much more than a mere reduction
of religious services to greater simplicity so far as ministerial

[1] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), I. ii. 162-168, or Neal,
History of the Puritans, i. 183-185.

[2] Strype, *Life of Parker* (ed. 1821), i. 439, and Neal, as previous note,
i. 185.

[3] Strype, as previous note, i. 441-443, and Neal, as previous note, i. 186.

[4] See letters from the Bishop of Durham, the Dean of Durham, and others,
given in Strype, *Life of Parker* (ed. 1821), i. 308, 311, 313, 421, and iii. 69,
76, 138.

[5] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), I. ii. 153-162.

[6] *Ibid.* II. i. 133-140.   *State Papers, Domestic Series, Elizabeth*, lxxviii. 38.
A brief account is in Froude's *History of England* (ed. 1870), x. 113.

dress and kindred things are concerned, although this reduc-
tion naturally formed part of the scheme. Music and choirs
were done away with : the Communion-table was set in the
nave ; and from the nave, too, instead of from the chancel,
the minister read the prayers. But the essential aim and
spirit of Puritanism comes out in other and more important
things. Those who wished to present themselves for Com-
munion had previously to render account of their lives, so
that something more than a mere formality might be seen in
the rite, and that something of fitness might be ensured.
After Communion, those who had been absent were asked
to render a reason of their neglect. There were special
services for the exposition of the Scriptures. Every Sunday
evening the younger people were catechised, the seniors
remaining and listening the while. Sufficiency of preaching
was provided for, since it was ordered that on every Sunday
there should be a sermon in the chief church, and that the
services at other churches should close in time for their con-
gregations to go and hear. At Northampton, also, in con-
nection with this same scheme, the " prophesyings " took
their rise—those " prophesyings " which spread so rapidly
into other parts of the country,[1] which soon became so
obnoxious in Elizabeth's eyes that in 1574 she compelled
Parker to issue orders for their suppression,[2] and which,
because Grindal, when he succeeded to Canterbury on
Parker's death, sought to favour them in spite of the Queen's
displeasure, led to that Primate's suspension from his see.[3]
The " prophesyings " were in reality assemblies—held weekly
or fortnightly on Saturday mornings—at which addresses on

[1] For "prophesyings" at Lincoln, see Strype, *Annals of the Reformation*
(ed. 1824), III. ii. 612, 613. In the diocese of Chester, *ibid.* III. i. 476-479.
At Norwich, J. Browne, *History of Congregationalism in Norfolk and Suffolk*,
pp. 18-20.

[2] *Parker Correspondence*, p. 456, and Strype's *Life of Parker* (ed. 1821),
ii. 359.

[3] Strype, *Life of Grindal* (ed. 1821), p. 343. This was in 1577 and marked
the end of the " prophesyings," which had not been effectually stopped after all
in 1574. Grindal had favoured them as likely to supply the deficiency of capable
preachers, an opinion shared by Bacon in *Certain Considerations touching the
Better Pacification and Edification of the Church of England* (*Works*, ed. Spedding,
Ellis and Heath, x. 119, 120). It should be added, as showing that things were
considered good or bad as the moment demanded, that in 1585 the Council
recommended the " prophesyings " which had been formally denounced (Strype,
Annals of the Reformation, ed. 1824, II. ii. 546).

prearranged religious themes were given by several pre-
arranged speakers, the first one opening the subject at length,
the others then supplementing or commenting, and the
president summing up the discussion at the close.   That the
speaking at such gatherings should frequently trench upon
the matters in dispute between the Puritans and the ecclesias-
tical constitutionalist is no matter for surprise ; and that
being so, it is no matter for surprise, either, that the Queen
and her advisers should look upon the gatherings with dislike.
The primary purpose of the "prophesyings" was, however,
religious rather than polemical ; and both for clergy and
people (the people were encouraged to come) they were,
from the religious point of view, of educational value and
power.   The entire Northampton system, in fact, stands out
as another piece of evidence to the real character of Puritanism
and of its essential aims.   Some of its elements, it is worth
while to note in passing, bear a certain resemblance to
elements in that other scheme of religious culture which later
on, at the time of the Evangelical Revival, Puritanism within
the Established Church drew up.   A scheme of definitely
religious culture it assuredly was.   And it may be said, in
fine, that in the "Northampton model" Puritanism made, as
has been suggested, a not altogether unsuccessful attempt at
achieving the expression of its own inmost heart, and once
again proved that it was upon essentially spiritual ideals its
inmost heart was set.

There were no doubt, among the adherents of the
Northampton system, some who leant towards the Presby-
terian method of Church order—of which leaning certain
sentences in a Confession of Faith, signed by the ministers
connected with the movement, bear witness.   To the hier-
archy the description of "an order of papistry" was rudely
applied.   But the system as a whole was not decisively
Presbyterian.   It is elsewhere—to another movement
which, almost simultaneously with the establishment of
the "Northampton Model," swung out of its earlier rest-
lessness into swift and audible stride—that we must look
for a manifestation of Presbyterianism properly so termed,
for a manifestation of the doctrine that the setting up
of Presbyterian government was the imperative duty of

the hour and the Church's chiefest need. The leaven of Geneva had indeed been at work ever since, at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, the exiles had come back : the defection of many who had seemed to be imbued with Genevan ideas had still left those ideas at work within some whose comparatively lower rank sheltered them from a crisis wherein an openly announced choice was involved ; and as far back as 1565 Archbishop Parker, with true discernment, had declared that Presbyterianism was the Church's most threatening foe. Undoubtedly, so far as the immediate situation was concerned, he was right. Puritanism, being a spirit rather than a system, might be destined to profounder influence and longer life, and might, when persecuted in one place, find subtle ways of escape into another, so spreading itself in circles drawn very widely round the centre where it first began ; but its appeal to the average imagination was less tangible, less concrete, less concentrated, than that of Presbyterianism, so that its danger, however great intrinsically, loomed up only fairly far ahead. Presbyterianism, being a system rather than a spirit, defined itself clearly, issued a very articulate challenge, met the points of the existing system by equally outstanding points of its own, and so possessed, as it were, an actual body against which blows could and must be struck at once. It was spirit against existing system in the one case—and the existing system could congratulate itself, as always in such cases, that the advantage of position was on its side. It was system against existing system in the other case—and the combatants, therefore, were far more evenly matched, the existing system having far less margin of advantage on which to rely. Any signs of Presbyterianism's growth may well have given Parker some uneasy hours ; and he may well have felt that, in the event of Presbyterianism making anything in the nature of a really offensive movement, no time must be lost. And doubtless Parker's apprehensions, quickly justified as they were in the offensive movement actually made by Presbyterianism in 1572, urged both Parker and the Queen into those more sternly repressive measures under which Puritanism and Independency, as well as Presbyterianism, were after that period made to groan.

The manifesto in which Presbyterianism sprang aggres-
sively upon the world is known as "The Admonition to
Parliament." It would, perhaps, be more correct to say
"manifestoes" rather than "manifesto," since there were
actually a first and a second. But the interval between
the two parts was only a few months; and as subsequent
reprints give both together, they may be considered as one.[1]
The first part was drawn up by John Field, Thomas Wilcox,
and others, Cartwright, the famous Presbyterian leader,
being for the moment absent from the scene. Wilcox and
Field were, of course, the representatives of others beside
themselves; and Bancroft gives the names of some who had
met privately when the "Admonition" was framed.[2] If his
list be correct, it shows that some who were by no means
pronounced Presbyterians leant themselves at first to the
Presbyterian cause; for Sampson figures upon it, and he,
whatever may have been his passing Presbyterian moods,
did not, as we have seen, think it worth while to persist in
opposition to the end. It is probable, in any case, that
when Cartwright, returning at the end of the year, assumed
completer control of the movement, some of those who
were not prepared to go to Cartwright's length drew back.
For Cartwright paused at nothing. In his eyes Presby-
terianism bore an exclusive divine commission, and must
smite the world into submission, if need be even with the
sword. Having been for little more than a year Lady
Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, and having
been deprived, on Whitgift's accession to the Vice-
Chancellorship of the University, for his boldness in attack-
ing the existing constitution of the Church,[3] Cartwright
had gone abroad to confer with the Continental Reformers,
and had through that conferring become still more established
upon, or one might even without injustice say more fanatical
concerning, the Presbyterian idea. It was not without his
influence and counsel being brought to bear upon it that the
first part of the "Admonition" took its shape: the second
part, however (Cartwright hurried back to England in

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[1] The two Admonitions appear as *An Admonition to the Parliament holden
in the 13th year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth*. See edition of 1617.
[2] *Survey of the Pretended Holy Discipline*, p. 2.
[3] Strype, *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), i. 38.

November of 1572), was much more decidedly his work. The full contents of the " Admonition " would take too much space to set out.[1] It must suffice to say that it denounced all such clerical offices and ranks as are implied in the existence of Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, and the rest, that it objected to liturgical prayer, and that it called for the setting up in every congregation of " a lawful and godly seigniory "—this " seigniory " to consist of ministers, seniors, and deacons[2] alone—by which the affairs of the congregation were to be supervised and " discipline " maintained. Moreover—for Presbyterianism meant a good deal more to Cartwright than even the " Admonition " revealed—this Presbyterian Established Church whose day Cartwright longed so passionately to see was to be practically the supreme power in the land, certainly in all matters even remotely connected, or that could be supposed to be even remotely connected, with religion : the secular power was to wait ever humbly at the Church's beck and call, to enforce her decisions and to secure for her the spiritual monopoly she claimed ; and heretics, schismatics all who either positively rejected the Church's precepts or only in indifference turned their eyes from her glory, were to be pitilessly beaten down into the dust. The fanatic's unmistakable note rings out in Cartwright's declaration— made in connection with his opinion that even upon repentance false teachers had no title to the grace of being permitted to live—" If this be extreme, I am content to be so counted with the Holy Ghost."[3] Presbyterianism, in fact, as Cartwright and his adherents conceived it, meant simply the substitution of the Genevan method of Church government for that which already prevailed ; and by that statement of its programme its limits are precisely defined. So far as spirit, and position in the world, are concerned, it involved no change or substitution at all ; or, if it substituted anything for the intolerance and tyrannous pressure upon

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[1] A good summary may be found in Pierce's *Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts*, pp. 36-40.

[2] Deacons in the Presbyterian system (as also in the Independent) look after the congregation's temporal affairs, and are not, as in the Church of England, an order of the clergy. Seniors are, of course, " presbyters."

[3] *Helps for the Discovery of Truth in point of Toleration*, pp. 12, 13.

conscience engendered or exercised by the prevailing system,
it substituted for these an intolerance and a pressure yet
more extreme.   For Presbyterianism, organisation and the
submission of men to its arrangements—organisation and
the humble adjustment of the religious movements of men
to the movements of its machinery—were the primary
things for which the interests of religion called.

In the first and second " Admonitions "—which, although
intended, as their name implies, for presentation to Parlia-
ment, were never so presented after all, but merely published
for public reading in the ordinary way—Presbyterianism
offered its literary self-explanation and self-justification to the
world.   Simultaneously, Presbyterianism established itself
in concrete form and in practical working, just as Puritanism
had established itself at Northampton in the previous year.
At Wandsworth the first English Presbytery was set up in
November of 1572—though, since Field was one of the
moving spirits in its creation, and since Field was im-
prisoned in July for his share in drawing up the " Admoni-
tion," its real genesis must be placed at a somewhat earlier
date [1]—elders being appointed, rules drawn up, and such a
" disciplinary " system set in operation as that for which the
" Admonition " had called.   For information concerning the
Wandsworth arrangements we are unfortunately dependent
upon Bancroft,[2] the bitter opponent of Presbyterianism, and
upon Heylin,[3] the equally bitter historian of its rise.   And
indeed the available information does not amount to much.
It is not very clear how far those participating in the
Wandsworth movement carried their separation from the
parish Church : we cannot be certain whether they went so
far as entire repudiation, or whether, while still sharing more
or less in the established worship, they contented themselves
with setting up their " Presbytery " for the exercising of
spiritual supervision over those who favoured the Presbyterian
" disciplinary " idea.[4]   If the latter, it was only because they

[1] Price, *History of Protestant Nonconformity*, i. 237 note.
[2] *Dangerous Positions and Proceedings, published and practised within this
Island of Britain, under pretence of Reformation, and for the Presbyterial
Discipline* (ed. 1712), pp. 66, 67.
[3] *Aerius redivivus*, or, *History of the Presbyterians*, p. 237.
[4] For an informing discussion of the Wandsworth movement, see an article by
Principal Lorimer in the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, xxi. 758-772.

considered that for stronger measures the time was still
unripe.   And in any case the thing was not done in a
corner, and was a definite manifestation of Presbyterian
practice, a definite assertion of Presbyterian right.   Bancroft's
suggestion that the real promoters of the movement (that is,
the Presbyterian ministers of London, who were meeting in
"Conferences" for the consideration and furtherance of measures
of reform) were endeavouring " by little and little, as much as
they possibly might," to draw Presbyterianism " into practice,
though they concealed the names either of Presbytery, Elder,
or Deacon ; making little account of the name for a time,
so that their offices might be secretly established," [1] is merely
the poison-tipped dart of an irritated foe.   The suggestion
is unsupported by fact ; and the Presbyterian leaders do not,
to any unprejudiced observer, seem to have been men who
were likely to seek their ends by devious and underground
paths.   Indeed, one of the outstanding " notes " of Elizabethan
Presbyterianism just at this time is the courage with which
it donned its badges and waved its defiant flag.   In short,
the " Order of Wandsworth " signalised the actual and open
setting up of the Presbyterian system, or of an important
part of it, before the eyes of men.

So, by 1572, both Puritanism and Presbyterianism had
crystallised into visible organic shape.   And for twenty years
thereafter, till the Act of 1593 (whose effect in driving the
Independents from the land has been before noted) [2] forced
Presbyterianism into either exile or silence, disintegrated the
by no means scanty Presbyterian companies which had here
and there grown up, and settled even Puritanism into a sort
of stupor from which only after the accession of James did
it attempt to rise—for twenty years Puritanism and Presby-
terianism maintained their war against odds.   The appear-
ance of the " Admonition " was the signal for strong measures
on the part of the Queen and the hierarchy, Field and
Wilcox being committed to jail, and a warrant being issued
for Cartwright's arrest.   Cartwright, however, contrived to
keep himself out of his enemies' hands, and in 1574 left the

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[1] *Dangerous Positions and Proceedings, published and practised within this
Island of Britain, under pretence of Reformation, and for the Presbyterial
Discipline* (ed. 1712), p. 68.   [2] *Supra*, pp. 184, 185.

country, maintaining both before and after his departure a literary controversy with Whitgift, his former Cambridge antagonist, whom Parker selected to deal a counter-stroke upon the "Admonition" through the press.[1]   As his lieutenant of the pen, Cartwright had at his side the able and learned Travers, called by Fuller the "neck" of the Presbyterian party, as Cartwright himself was termed the "head,"[2] who sent out in 1574 a Latin treatise (subsequently translated by Cartwright) which covered the entire Presbyterian ground.[3]   Nor was the controversy one in which the general public were conscious of no appeal.   The "Admonition" had been largely circulated, and was besides so treasured that an order from the Queen, bidding all owners of the book bring their copies to the bishops, proved like water spilt upon the sand.   Not a single copy was surrendered in London.[4]   The fact is significant of a by-no-means inconsiderable growth of Presbyterian sentiment among the people at large.   That in spite of all hostility the Wandsworth Presbyterian order was multiplying itself throughout the country, is evident from the fact that Bancroft devotes a chapter in his book to an account of their growth from 1572 to 1583.[5]   By the last-named year, the movement had gathered sufficient strength, and had become, so to say, sufficiently conscious of itself and its methods, to compile the "Directory of Church Government," which it was hoped to substitute for the rubrics and the Book of Common Prayer as the authoritative exposition of the Church's principles and order.[6]   These years, in fact, may be taken as the strongest years of Elizabethan Presbyterianism : they mark a period in which it almost looked as if Parker's fear of the system had been prophetic of the system's actual triumph ; and one cannot but speculate with some interest as to what might have happened had not the stern and

[1] For a brief account of the controversy, see Soames, *Elizabethan Religious History*, pp. 174-176.

[2] *Church History* (ed. Brewer), iv. 468.

[3] *Ecclesiasticae disciplinae et Anglicanae Ecclesiae ab illa aberrationis plena e Verbo Dei et dilucida explicatio.*

[4] Strype, *Life of Parker* (ed. 1821), ii. 256.

[5] *Dangerous Positions and Proceedings, published and practised within this Island of Britain, under pretence of Reformation and for the Presbyterial Discipline* (ed. 1712), pp. 67, 68.   [6] *Ibid.* pp. 44 ff.

relentless Whitgift entered upon the Primacy when he did. And even Whitgift's iron measures might have had less complete success had not Cartwright, arrested upon his return to England in 1585, found his broken health and impaired spirit unequal to fighting the fight as strenuously as before, and withdrawn to the comparative quietude of a post as Hospital-Master at Warwick—a post obtained for him at Leicester's request.[1]   It was not that Cartwright abjured. He simply dropped away from the advance.   And to the militant Presbyterians this must have been as the loss of a legion, not easily to be made good.   With its hitherto fiery leader no longer in the forefront of its battle, and with Whitgift smiting down upon them his newly-forged and newly-sharpened arms, it is little wonder that Presbyterianism found itself first slackened in pace, then brought to pause, and at length borne back.   Its great period, at any rate, consists of the ten or twelve years running between the time-limits which have just been named.

Meanwhile, Puritanism was spreading through ranks both clerical and lay.   The Parliament of 1571, as has before been stated,[2] contained a markedly Puritan element, an attempt being made in it, by a Mr. Strickland, to secure liberty of action for those of the clergy who thought that in matters of ceremonial the English Church had not been sufficiently reformed.[3]   The attempt was renewed in 1575 by Sir Peter Wentworth,[4] who had warmly seconded Strickland's earlier effort.   In neither case did the attempt succeed, for, strong as the parliamentary Puritan element was, it was not strong enough to force its will upon a House of Commons which, besides being to a great extent unwilling, was conscious that if it yielded it would have to reckon with an imperious Queen and an angered episcopal bench.   Yet the Queen did not have all her way ; for, having suspended Strickland from the House, she was compelled, under the Commons' energetic protest and call of " privilege," to let him return, and in Wentworth's case she did nothing more drastic than say that she " utterly misliked the bills, and would have

[1] Strype, *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), ii. 459. Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), vii. 180.   [2] *Supra*, p. 170.

[3] Dewes, *Journal of all the Parliaments of Elizabeth*, pp. 156, 157, 176.

[4] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), III. i. 185.

the matter proceed no further."[1]   The echo of lay sympathy
with the Puritan position rings down to us clearly enough
from these facts—so clearly, indeed, that Hallam expressly
affirms the Puritans or their favourers to have been in the
majority among the Protestant gentry of Elizabeth's time.[2]
As to Puritanism among the clergy, there is equally eloquent
witness to its growing prevalence.   For in 1573 the Queen,
again irritated at the disorder and lack of uniformity which,
notwithstanding decrees, proclamations, and penalties, flaunted
themselves still across the land, once more spurred on her
Council, bidding them pass on to the Bishops, in order that
the Bishops might pass on to the disobedient clergy with
interest, the sharp pricks she gave—with the result that a
special Commission was sent to search out Nonconformity
through all the dioceses, and that in the Norwich diocese
alone no less than three hundred ministers, being found in
default, were suspended from their posts.[3]   Some of these,
no doubt, were of definite Presbyterian conviction, but not
all.   And since the Eastern Counties formed throughout
this period the specially infected area of ecclesiastical re-
calcitrancy, we are not to infer that the Norwich figures
suggest the uniform rate for Church of England Non-
conformity in the country at large.   Still, with every
deduction made, the numbers tell a sufficiently striking tale.
Besides this, we have but to recall facts which have been
noted in other connections as our history has gone on—the
quick and wide spread of the "prophesyings" up to 1557,[4]
those Puritan services of which Lord Rich's at Rochford may
be taken as the type,[5] the early Puritanic position occupied
previous to their passing into Independency, of Browne,
Harrison, Greenwood, Barrow and others [6]—to feel convinced
that Puritanism of the kind for which the name of Puritanism
ought to be strictly reserved was rapidly developing as this
decade went on.   When in 1583 Whitgift came to Canter-

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[1] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), III. i. 185.   Wentworth
was committed to the Tower three years later for an imprudent, yet by no
means morally unjustifiable, speech against Elizabeth's attempt to muzzle the
Commons on religious affairs (Dewes, *Journal of all the Parliaments of Elizabeth*,
p. 239).   He was, however, released within a month.
[2] *Constitutional History* (ed. 1854), i. 189 note.
[3] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, i. 249.
[4] *Supra*, p. 227.   [5] *Supra*, p. 182.   [6] See Section 2 of this chapter.

bury, after Grindal's unsatisfactory eight years' primacy had followed Parker's death, he must have realised that the ideal of absolute uniformity which was no less his own than it was his Sovereign's, was about as far from realisation as it had ever been, and that—what with Puritans, Presbyterians, and Independents multiplying upon his hands—he would have no light task in bending the situation into the shape he willed.

None the less he grasped it firmly and without fear. From the point of view of Elizabeth's ecclesiastical ideals, Whitgift was indeed a contrast to Grindal his immediate predecessor, and an improvement even upon Parker himself. We have briefly characterised him before;[1] and it only needs to be added now that he had none of Parker's underlying kindness, none of Parker's readiness to apply healing after the stroke demanded by duty had been dealt.   Somewhat curiously, Whitgift held Church order and organisation to be a matter of expediency rather than of absolute Scripture ordaining;   and when Bancroft, his chaplain, preached at St. Paul's Cross in 1589 the famous sermon which was meant to demonstrate Episcopacy's divine right,[2] Whitgift remarked that he rather wished than believed the contention to be true.[3]   It was one of the curious anomalies of this strangely-confused situation that an Archbishop should thus take lower ground than the Presbyterians whom he put forth all his strength to crush.   But the fact made no difference whatever to his repressive mood.   Episcopacy might be based upon expediency rather than upon divine right :   acceptance of it must nevertheless be enforced as authoritatively as acceptance of any heaven-sent revelation could have been.   No sooner was Whitgift seated upon the throne of Canterbury, than the "Whitgift Articles" were drawn up, and a new Ecclesiastical Commission invested with plenary powers to apply the articles as a test to every minister whom there was reason to suspect of lukewarmness towards the established order.[4]   It was in the sixth Article that the sharpness of the test lay ;   for this required

[1] *Supra*, p. 183.
[2] *Sermon at St. Paule's Crosse.*   See also Heylin, *Aerius redivivus*, p. 287.
[3] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, i. 397.
[4] Strype, *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), i. 228 ff.

acknowledgment that the Book of Common Prayer contained nothing contrary to God's word, and that the ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, as practised, was similarly in accordance, or at any rate not in conflict, with what Scripture taught.   The spirit by which the Archbishop was dominated is shown in the provision that solitary imprisonment, and even the rack, might be employed to compel those cited before the Commission into speech.   " According to my simple judgment," said Burleigh (for he, with Leicester, Knollys, and others of the Council, distrusted the entire ecclesiastical policy on which their mistress had embarked) " this kind of proceeding is too much savouring of the Roman Inquisition, and is rather a device to seek for offenders, than to reform any." [1]   The description, though perhaps erring somewhat on the side of mildness, is otherwise wholly apt ; but then to seek for offenders was precisely what Whitgift wished to do.   And although, probably as a sort of superficial concession to the scruples and objections of some in high places, he arranged in the autumn of 1584 a kind of disputation between the Church's supporters and the Church's opponents, at which Leicester and others were present,[2] he never hesitated on the course he had marked out.   Moreover, he had the Queen behind him ; and knowledge of this fact was sufficient to limit to the point of futility any action which the objecting members of the Council might take.   In point of fact, when the Council did write to Whitgift complaining that his treatment of some suspended clergy had been too severe, a haughty reply from the Archbishop to the effect that the matter was his business, not theirs, and that he could not do his duty by the Queen if the Council interfered,[3] was enough to make the Council drop the protesting hand it had ventured to raise.   From the beginning to the end, Whitgift won all along the line.

The " Whitgift Articles " and the Ecclesiastical Commission at once produced from Puritanism a remonstrance,

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[1] *Calendar of State Papers* (Domestic Series 1581-1590), p. 189.

[2] Probably the original cause of this was a letter which Lady Bacon had written to Burleigh asking that some of the nonconforming ministers might be allowed to plead for themselves in some such way (*Lansdowne MSS.* British Museum, xliii. folios 119, 120).

[3] Strype, *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), i. 250-255.

and from Presbyterianism a counter-stroke. The re-
monstrance of the Puritans was embodied in petitions from
many ministers of Kent, Sussex, Suffolk, and other places,
to the effect that while they were on the whole loyal to the
Constitution of the Church and to the Book of Common
Prayer, Whitgift's sixth article was more than they could
with any conscience subscribe, since it left no room for such
changes as they deemed fidelity to Scripture required.[1]
The Presbyterians were more aggressive, meeting Whitgift's
attack by an attempt to introduce into the Parliament of
1584 a Bill whereby the "Discipline" would have been
enacted as the law of the English Church.[2]   The House,
however, was by no means Presbyterian enough to let the
Bill be introduced against the prohibition of the Queen ;
while, on the other hand, it was sufficiently Puritan to send
up to the Lords for their approval (which was withheld) a
petition, intended for subsequent presentation to the Queen,
wherein the restoration of the prophesyings was asked for,
together with recognition of non-episcopal ordination and a
share by the congregations in the appointment of ministers
to their posts.   All this, however, was of small avail against
the Archbishop's iron will and unweakening power.   Puri-
tanism gained little or nothing by its remonstrances ; and
the attempt at the introduction of the Bill aforesaid was
Presbyterianism's last movement of attack.   Acceptance
of the "Discipline," indeed, continued to spread.   "Classes"
—or local gatherings for the discussion of Church matters
from the Presbyterian point of view—and also larger
and more central assemblies at London and Cambridge,
multiplied under a more or less successfully veiled secrecy ;[3]
so that notwithstanding Whitgift's strong measures, and
notwithstanding Cartwright's comparative quietude after his
arrest in 1585, it is reckoned that by 1590, when Whitgift's
inquisition made another and yet more determined spurt, no
less than five hundred ministers had formally signed their

[1] Strype, *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), i. 245, 246, 250, 255.
[2] *Dangerous Positions and Proceedings, published and practised within this
Island of Britain, under pretence of Reformation and for the Presbyterial
Discipline* (ed. 1712), p. 75.   Strype, *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), i. 348.
[3] See R. G. Usher's *The Presbyterian Movement in the Reign of Elizabeth*,
in which the "minute book" of the "Dedham classis" is reprinted.

adherence to the Presbyterian platform.[1]   But the aggressive force of Presbyterianism was spent.   And meanwhile, Whitgift's temper was rising, various influences assisting to send it up the scale.   The discovery of the extent of the Presbyterian gatherings was one.   Such a threat of yet further disturbance as was embodied in Separatism (the matter of Barrow and Greenwood had been upon the Archbishop's hands since 1586[2]) was another.   But the " Marprelate Tracts "—1588 and 1589—constituted a still more powerful force.   The mystery concerning the authorship of these productions has invested them with an importance they hardly deserve ; and the virulence and vulgarity of their anti-episcopal attack can bring no credit to any cause.[3]   They are neither Presbyterian nor Independent, and Puritan only in the sense that they manifest deep dissatisfaction with the existing order—though of course the fact that they were evidently representative of much popular feeling, and popular in their appeal, is an indirect testimony to the wide spread of Puritan ideas.   It is small wonder that Whitgift was spurred on.   He was not the man to treat abuse with a quiet and noble scorn.   Even Paule, his enthusiastically admiring biographer, allows that he had one fault.   " The greatest, or rather only fault known in him was choler." [4]   And his failure to tear asunder the anonymity of the writer or writers of the " Tracts " doubtless kindled his wrath still more.   By 1590 it had risen high enough to bring about a more stringent enforcement of the Whitgift test.   Cartwright was re-arrested, and confronted with the charge—certainly not unfounded—that he had sought to set up a new ecclesiastical order, attended meetings of an ecclesiastically revolutionary type, and in various other ways transgressed the laws.[5]   With the *ex-officio* oath offered to him, Cartwright refused to take it, being thereupon sent to

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[1] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, i. 387 note.

[2] See Section 2 of this chapter.

[3] The literature of the Marprelate Tracts is copious.   Consult specially Arber, *Introductory Sketch to the Martin Marprelate Controversy*.   *An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts* by W. Pierce, is very useful for the general situation, though the author is much too favourably inclined towards the tracts themselves, and sides much too pronouncedly with their author.

[4] Paule, *Life of Whitgift*, in Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, iv. 390.

[5] Strype, *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), ii. 24.

prison, whence he, with others, obtained his release two years later on a general promise to order himself in peace.[1]   By that time the prospect may well have seemed to him hopeless ; for Whitgift's mood had risen to the height of the measure which enabled him finally to trample upon his foes. And Parliament—partly under dread of the displeasure which Elizabeth had already visited upon some of its members who had dared to claim freedom of speech on religious affairs,[2] and partly under the influence of the terror which the approach of the Armada had recently laid upon the land, and which, working primarily against the Romanists, was apt to obscure the distinction between political and religious disobedience—was, spite of a still existing Puritan element, ready to aid him in his crowning stroke.[3]   The Act of 1593 made refusal to attend Church, and any attempt at persuading others against it, an offence punishable with imprisonment—the imprisonment to be followed, if three months found the offender obstinate still, by banishment and forfeiture of goods—and banishment itself being, if the banished returned, only the preliminary to a felon's death.[4] One sees now—in Paule's curious phrases—"of what an excellent nature this Archbishop was ; how far from giving offence, how ready to forgive a wrong, merciful, compassionate, and tender-hearted."[5]   If Whitgift's supremacy had ever been for any moment endangered, it was undoubtedly established now.

Alike to Puritanism, Presbyterianism, and Independency, the new Act brought an end of anything like aggressive propaganda, or at least invested it with risks graver than it had to encounter before.   There was no choice other than

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[1] Strype, *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), ii. 90.

[2] Morrice, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (with the support of Sir Francis Knollys) brought into this Parliament a Bill against the Church Courts and the arbitrary enforcement of subscription.   He was arrested in the House, and suffered imprisonment for seven years. (Heylin, *Aerius redivivus*, p. 320.)

[3] Soames puts it strongly.   " Thus the puritanical party, whose exertions, undoubtedly, rendered great eventual services to civil and religious liberty, stands forth as an accomplice in a gross violation of both " (*Elizabethan Religious History*, p. 414).   Superficially this is correct.   But it leaves too many things unsaid.

[4] Dewes, *Journal of all the Parliaments of Elizabeth*, p. 520 ; Neal, *History of the Puritans*, i. 426, 427.

[5] Paule, *Life of Whitgift*, in Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, iv. 390.

the choice between exile and silence.   We have noted how
Independency, with the exception of certain of its adherents
who endeavoured to elude the eye of the authorities and at
the same time to worship in their own chosen way, betook
itself to Holland's freer and more promising shores.   Presby-
terianism did the same.   It was even more difficult for
Presbyterianism than for Independency to maintain itself
secretly in England ; for the Independent idea was to a
great extent fulfilled in the existence of single assemblies,
while Presbyterianism involved a more elaborate organisation
—as it were the stretching of a system of nerves and sinews
across wider spaces—and was consequently too obtrusive
a thing to hide.   Presbyterianism, therefore, departed in
company with the Separatism which it hated so much.   The
two systems had all through been at daggers drawn ; and it
was one of the curiosities, if the term may be used, of that
complicated time that bodies so alienated from the established
Church should be alienated from one another equally far.[1]
For that matter, some even among modern Presbyterian
writers depreciate the Separatists of early days—one of
them grouping the Brownists with the Anabaptists and with
the "Family of Love" as having made Presbyterianism's
cause hard beyond what it would have been.[2]   But the Act
of 1593 united the two opponents, if not in love, at any
rate in banishment and in the suffering which banishment
involved.   Presbyterianism, in so far as it remained in
England (and its revival at a later date perhaps shows that
a remnant must have maintained its place, although the
later Presbyterianism was not so much a continuation of the
earlier as an entirely new growth) had to suppress its
distinctly Presbyterian activities, and to sink itself in that
Puritanism whose lot, hard as it was, was nevertheless not
quite so hard.   For Puritanism could count certain advantages
over Presbyterianism in facing the circumstances of the

[1] Cartwright himself had a sister - in - law among the Brownists.   Dr.
Waddington (*Congregational History*, ii. 19-22) quotes from the Bodleian MSS.
part of a discussion in which the two relatives tried to persuade one another.
Puritanism, equally with Presbyterianism, was hostile to Independency.

[2] Drysdale, *History of the English Presbyterians*, p. 196.   Another writer
(M'Crie, *Annals of English Presbytery*, p. 112) makes the surprising assertion
that the Brownists resembled the Plymouth Brethren.

time, did not need to retreat quite so far, was at least better able to reconcile silence with continued partial life—so keeping itself ready for whatever opportunity of revived protest might presently arrive. And although the revival of Presbyterianism was to come, the revival of Puritanism was to come first ; so that it was as Puritanism, not as Presbyterianism, that Nonconformity within the Church revealed itself when soon afterwards its resurrection came. A spirit rather than an organisation, Puritanism could, together with an occasional outward conformity whereby the penalties of the Act would be evaded, now and then assert itself when circumstances seemed favourable, and, without explicitly abandoning its contentions, wait in comparative quietness for better times. This is, in effect, what happened during Elizabeth's closing years. The Queen's age was great ; and it was expected by some that James —her successor as was very generally assumed—having been brought up in the Presbyterian air of Scotland, would be much more favourable than the Queen had been to dissidents from the Anglican system. More thorough consideration might perhaps have led to the conclusion that the son of Mary Stuart was likely to have inherited tendencies and sympathies of a Romeward kind. So at any rate the Catholics themselves surmised. Before James became King of England, the Pope—Clement VIII.—" had let him know that he prayed for him as the son of so virtuous a mother . . . and trusted yet to see him a Catholic."[1] The Romanist expectation was not to be perfectly fulfilled ; but the Puritan expectation was to be proved utterly false. Meanwhile it enabled Puritanism to bide its time. And even from the Anglican side the great controversy was conducted in milder tones. The " Ecclesiastical Polity " of Richard Hooker,[2] published in 1594, showed a very different spirit from that which had inspired the legislation of the previous year. While issuing from what was practically Whitgift's platform, it had none of Whitgift's bitterness ; and though uncompromising in its assertion of the right of the Church to

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[1] Ranke, *History of the Popes*, ii. 243 (Eng. trans., ed. 1907, York Library).
[2] Strype, *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), ii. 147-149. Hooker's work may be conveniently studied in the Oxford edition of 1888. This is Keble's arrangement, revised by Dean Church and Canon Paget.

claim the obedience of all men (Hooker, like Whitgift, bases
the right, not on a direct divine ordinance, but on a sort of
acquired exclusive validity which proved expediency has
conferred) its tone is persuasive, philosophic, and calm.   For
the time being the storm winds ceased to blow.   Yet signs
of the presence of Puritanism lifted themselves out of the
comparative stillness every now and again.   The " Sabbath
controversy "—initiated by a book of Dr. Bound's,[1] wherein
it was maintained, as against the Church's many calendared
official " days," that the Lord's Day was the one appointed
and binding " holy fast," to be observed in strictest style,
and not in the Pagan riot which generally desecrated this
and the other so-called " holy " times—marked the beginning
of a doctrinal divergence between Puritanism and Anglicanism
destined to become more acute before many years had
passed.   The controversy was to overflow the boundaries
of the field of Church government, and to spread over that
of religious belief in the more exact sense.   Ultimately,
the doctrinal situation was to be practically made up of an
Arminian Anglicanism and a Calvinistic Puritanism.   In
regard to this particular dispute, it is not difficult to see how
the spirit of Puritanism, surveying the entire position, and
debarred from more general active self-assertion, came to
seize upon one particular point in which the ordinance and
organisation of man had, as it thought, supplanted the
simplicity of the ordinance of God, and to labour at it as
being typical of the whole.   For the moment, however,
the issue of Bound's book, and the controversy to which it
pertained, are noteworthy as tokens that the total suppression
of dissidence aimed at by the Act of 1593 was not, so far
as concerns Puritanism, altogether achieved.   Another sign
lies in that development of Puritanism in Lincolnshire and
Nottinghamshire during Elizabeth's later years which has
been already alluded to.[2]   That occasionally Puritanism
showed an even bolder front is evidenced by the recorded
brutality with which one magistrate—Sir Edmund Anderson

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[1] Strype, *Life of Whitgift* (ed. 1822), ii. 415.

[2] *Supra*, p. 187.   Information concerning the Puritan clergy of this period
may be found in Brook's *Lives of the Puritans*, vol. ii.   For Puritanism in
Lancashire, see particularly R. Halley's *Lancashire, Its Puritanism and
Nonconformity*, i. 159-216.

—treated some who were brought before his court.[1]   More-
over, the dislike which soon afterwards showed itself in the
Parliament of James against the King's anti-Puritan measures
stands as proof that Puritan sympathies had been spreading
among the laity as well as in the clerical ranks.   So that
from 1593 up to Elizabeth's death, Puritanism, not quite
spent amid the buffeting of the waves which had beaten
upon it, scant of breath and yet hopeful that the worst
effects of hostility's flood might be past, waited for the
turning of the tide.   Whitgift's great measure indeed wrought
for him nearly all his will—but not quite the whole.
Separatism, with a few exceptions, went.   Presbyterianism,
save in so far as it surrendered features which were of the
very essence of its life, went too.   But Puritanism, chastened
sore and yet not given over unto death, advantaged in that
it was essentially a thing of the innermost spirit and there-
fore in the last resort inaccessible to any carnal weapons—
Puritanism held on.   And it was as Puritanism that
Nonconformity within the Church of England showed itself
when James the First ascended the throne.

The new King's accession was a signal for the pouring
in of petitions from those who supposed that in the person
of James their deliverer had come.   Of the petitions vainly
presented by the exiled Separatists we have already spoken.[2]
The Puritans, on their side, drew up the famous " Millenary
Petition," which, while keeping so far away from Presby-
terianism as expressly to disclaim any desire for a change
of ecclesiastical order, embodied the customary Puritan ideas
as to the omission of " popish " ceremonies from worship,
the providing of adequate preachers, and the various other
points which have come before us before.[3]   The statement
frequently made that this petition was signed by about a
thousand ministers is an error;[4] but for subsequent
petitions (in the obtaining of which Henry Jacob, later on
the pastor of the Southwark Independent Church,[5] took a

[1] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (ed. 1824), iv. 367-372.

[2] *Supra*, p. 185.

[3] The petition is given by Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Lathbury), vii. 273-276.

[4] See Gardiner, *History of England from 1603 to 1642*, i. 148 note, and Usher, *The Reconstruction of the English Church*, i. 290 note.

[5] *Supra*, p. 191.

prominent part) that number of names was easily secured.
Apparently impressed to some extent, the King, although
deprecating the multiplication of petitions as tending to
disturbance of that "repose" for his subjects which he
valued so highly, arranged for a conference at Hampton
Court between the representatives of the Church and four
speakers on the Puritan side. This might be taken as a
hopeful sign ; and perhaps when he summoned the Con-
ference James was in a better mood than when he met it. But
if the Puritans built upon the fact of the assembly being
summoned any hopes of relief, they built upon sand. One
may be grateful that out of a suggestion made by Dr.
Reynolds, the chief spokesman of the Puritans, the King's
resolve for a new translation of the Bible was born. But
for the rest, the Puritan delegates found that what they
had taken to be a fountain proved, when the spot was
reached, only a mirage. The Archbishops and Bishops
(Bancroft, now Bishop of London, out-did Whitgift in brow-
beating and stern retort), together with the other ecclesi-
astical dignitaries, had their will : the chance of a fair
hearing for the Puritans melted away in the increasing heat :
the King's mood went higher ; till in the end it exploded
into the remark, " I will none of that, and therefore, either
let them conform themselves and that shortly, or they shall
hear of it." [1] When anger passed it was only to let scorn
come in its stead ; for, writing to someone in Scotland
shortly afterwards, James remarks, " We have kept such a
revel with the Puritans here this two days, as was never
heard the like ; where I have peppered them as soundly
as ye have done the papists there." [2] The Puritans had
assuredly nothing pleasant to look forward to when it was
with such an outburst as this ringing in its ears that their

[1] Barlow, *The Hampton Court Conference* (ed. 1604), p. 102. There
seems insufficient authority for the version of the King's remark usually
given, " I will harry them out of the land, or else do worse." Various
accounts of the Conference are accessible, and some of the principal ones are
given in Cardwell's *History of Conferences*, pp. 160-217. Dr. Usher furnishes
a good summary of the proceedings—though he is entirely on the anti-Puritan
side—in *The Reconstruction of the English Church*, i. 310-333, and prints
(*ibid.* ii. 331-354) some hitherto unprinted records. See also Strype, *Life of
Whitgift*, iii. 402-407.
[2] Cardwell, *History of Conferences*, p. 161.

disillusioned deputation left the presence of the King. If James had been awaited as the deliverer before he came, he stood out clearly as the tyrant now that he had come.

The succession of Bancroft to the Primacy (Whitgift died in the Conference year) gave him the opportunity for which he had hungered ever since the famous sermon at St. Paul's Cross, or perhaps even longer. Strong as Whitgift had been, Bancroft was stronger, and was anxious to prove himself so. All his life had been for a long time past inspired by a passionate detestation for the men—be they Puritans or Separatists—who followed what he supposed to be the merest fads, and refused to obey the divinely-appointed authority of the episcopal bench. Long ago, the University of Cambridge had recognised his zeal ; and when the ecclesiastical authorities of Norwich applied for some capable man to be sent into the eastern counties and pull up the Puritan tares which Robert Browne, in his pre-Separatist days, had sown among the wheat, it was upon Bancroft that the University's choice fell.[1] Bancroft had never changed. Now he had his chance. His work for the Church of England, it must in all fairness be confessed, was no insignificant one ; and his codification of her laws, his enclosing of all her numerous and diversified statutes, after revision, within the covers of the Canons of 1604, was a real statesman's achievement.[2] All through Elizabeth's reign there had been so many successive ecclesiastical edicts and pronouncements that the whole situation had in the end been left loose-threaded and ragged-edged : moreover, the late Queen's preference for leaving upon the Archbishop and Bishops the odium of whatever prescriptions might be required, and her habit of refusing her royal imprimatur whenever possible, had made the validity of some of these prescriptions suspect in the eyes of any who might find it convenient to doubt ;[3] and a

[1] Usher, *The Reconstruction of the English Church*, i. 32.
[2] The best and most thorough account of Bancroft's work is contained in the book just mentioned, *The Reconstruction of the English Church*, by an American scholar, Dr. Roland G. Usher.
[3] The Puritans did not overlook this point, either before or after Elizabeth's death. See some instances given in Usher's book, as preceding note, i. 195.

fitting together of the loose pieces, a fresh delivery to the
world of the entire body of ecclesiastical enactments duly
signed and sealed, was one of the crying needs of the hour.
This need Bancroft supplied.   To call his work, as Professor
Usher calls it, " The Reconstruction of the English Church,"
may be to use too high-sounding a term ; but full recogni-
tion of its value should be made.   With Bancroft, however,
organisation was nothing unless it enforced itself even upon
the most reluctant minds.   Once the Canons were pro-
mulgated, it was time for the Puritans to " hear of it," in
James's phrase ; and notwithstanding (or perhaps because
of, for both James and Bancroft waxed angrier at the
smallest touch of resistance) numerous Puritan petitions,
and some hesitancy on the part of even highly-placed men
—the Archbishop of York among them [1]—pressure was
rigorously applied.   There is no need to suppose that
Bancroft was essentially a cruel man.   At least one piece
of evidence to the contrary comes to us from a page in
Fuller, on which we are told how the Archbishop himself
promised to support a minister whose conscience would not
permit him to perform the Archbishop's will.[2]   But with
Bancroft compulsion was a matter of principle.   He must
see this matter through.   And he was well backed up by
the King.   Orders were sent across the country that all the
clergy must formally accept the established order of things,
from the Royal Supremacy down to the latest item in the
Canons of 1604 :[3] every precaution was taken to prevent
anything in the nature of procrastination or evasion : no
meetings even for conference were to be held ; and Parker's
order of 1566 to the London ministers to say " Yes or
No "[4] was now repeated on a larger scale as Bancroft
signalled from Canterbury to his episcopal colleagues in
every see.   Not all the Puritans, on this or any other
occasion, were heroes.   Some, both now and later on,
justified themselves for their conformity on the ground
that whatever the evils of conformity might be, the evils of

[1] *State Papers, Domestic Series, James*, x. 64, 65.

[2] *Church History* (ed. Brewer), v. 403.

[3] *State Papers, Domestic Series, James*, xiii. 25 ; Neal, *History of the Puritans*, ii. 34.

[4] *Supra*, p. 224.

separation were greater still.[1]   But by 1605 about three
hundred Puritan ministers had gone down under the storm
of archiepiscopal zeal, many of them seeking a refuge
abroad,[2] and the Puritan resurrection of James's accession
had come to seem like the mere transient stirring of a body
fated after all to die.   Nevertheless the end was not yet.
Circumstances, stepping in, prevented the suppression of
Puritanism from being as complete as Bancroft intended it
to be.

For one thing, the Archbishop's pressure upon the
Puritanism of the clergy (it was of course recognised that
in this matter the Archbishop and the King spoke as with
one voice and struck as with a single arm) helped to spread
sympathy with Puritanism outside the clerical ranks.   To a
great extent, it is true, this sympathy may have been
unreligiously motived ; but it existed and counted for a good
deal.   Already there was going on that mingling of political
and religious considerations which was to become so marked,
and which was to exercise so great an influence upon the
history of both politics and religion, not only through the
immediately following decades, but through all future decades
down to our own.   The King who was bent upon absolutism
in religion was as steadfastly bent upon absolutism in
general affairs : throughout his reign the quarrel concerning
the "divine right of kings" moved rapidly toward the climax
which it ultimately reached in the days of James's son : [3]
the House of Commons was obliged to contend ceaselessly
for its rights against the King's claim that he could impose
taxation as his fancy willed ; and it is small wonder that
those who opposed absolutism in secular affairs should oppose
it also in the religious sphere.   Royal tyranny towards
Puritanism was but another manifestation of the same spirit
which dictated royal tyranny towards Parliament and people
as a whole.   James, in fact, had driven the two causes—the
cause of Puritanism and the cause of general liberty—to

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[1] See Sprint's *Cassander Anglicus, shewing the Necessity of Conformity to the Prescribed Ceremonies of our Church, in case of Deprivation.*

[2] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, ii. 35, 36.

[3] "The most religious could wish that His Highness would be more sparing in using the name of God, and in comparing the Deity with the prince's sovereignty" (Nichols, *Progresses of James the First*, ii. 286).

coalesce. Even before James's accession the movement
towards alliance had begun. Elizabeth's attempts to muzzle
the Commons when they addressed themselves to religious
affairs and endeavoured to procure some relief for the
Puritan ministers who could not bring themselves to conform,
may probably be taken as marking its start. But in James's
reign the alliance was definitely formed. The Parliament of
1604—summoned when Bancroft's threats, though looming
stormily upon the sky-line, had not yet been consummated
in the expulsions of the following year—declared itself
anxious, among other things, that ecclesiastical grievances
should be redressed ;[1] and later Parliaments, although, owing
to the milder spirit in which Abbot, Bancroft's successor,
exercised his archiepiscopal sway, they found civil matters
rather than religious to be most in need of their care,
repeatedly included the affairs of the Church with the rest
when protesting against the undue length to which the
King's prerogative was stretched.[2] Puritanism found warmer
and warmer welcome in Parliament—and by inference,
among those whom Parliament represented—as its chance
of existence among the Church's ministers came to stand in
graver peril. For the autocracy which was the foe of
Puritanism was the foe also of the people's representatives
and of the people's will.

It should be noted, also, that there was another force
tending to foster the growth of Puritanism among the people
at large. Suspicions as to the reality of the King's attach-
ment to the Protestant faith—suspicions which in the case
of James's son were to multiply themselves sevenfold—were
spreading fast. They were not without ground. For one
thing, James frequently showed extreme reluctance to put
anti-Catholic penal laws into operation. Such reluctance
would of course have been in itself altogether commendable,
had it proceeded from a fundamental desire that no man's
conscience should be coerced ; but in view of James's dealings
with dissenting consciences other than Roman, it is no
matter for surprise that the public should have taken the

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[1] Gardiner, *History of England from 1603-1642*, i. 178-180.
[2] For instance, as to the Parliament of 1622, see Rushworth's *Historical
Collections*, i. 40-43.

special leniency shown towards Roman dissent as springing from a different source. Testimony to the King's practice of such leniency is abundant enough ; and even Lingard, the Catholic historian, after deploring Abbot's severe mood towards the Catholics, admits that " his vehemence was checked by the moderation of James." [1] The persistent desire displayed by James for a marriage between the Prince of Wales and the daughter of the Spanish Sovereign appeared to point the same way. [2] And the " Articles " issued by the King in the year 1622 [3]—a series of instructions which, while enjoining silence upon the pulpits in respect of what might be called the particular points of Puritan pleading, took little or no account of anything that favourers of Romanism might say or do—deepened the public unrest. We find Chamberlain writing to Carleton, after the " Articles " had appeared, saying that " the Dean of St. Paul's preached at the Cross, to testify the King's . . . constancy in the true reformed religion, which the people, it should seem, began to suspect." [4] Another significant incident is recorded in a letter sent to Sir Martin Stuteville by the Rev. Joseph Mead. The Bishop of London had sent for a certain preacher and had asked him what his text was going to be, showing some discontent and apprehension when he learnt that it was to be " I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different Gospel." [5] The preacher nevertheless clung to his text, adding at the sermon's close that " they might expect some application, but he was not ambitious of lying in prison." [6] Evidently suspicion was widely diffused, a matter of common knowledge and talk. It was natural enough that dread and dislike of Romanism—a dislike partly religious and partly political—should incline people generally towards that Puritanism which was Romanism's uncom-

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[1] *History of England* (ed. 1855), vii. 96.
[2] The earlier design, almost equally calculated to excite suspicion, had been to marry Charles to Christine, daughter of the King of France. So eager had James been for the alliance, that when his eldest son Henry died, Charles was suggested as a substitute within three days (Birch, *Life of Henry Prince of Wales*, p. 405). [3] Rushworth's *Historical Collections*, i. 64, 65.
[4] Birch, *Court and Times of James the First*, ii. 332.
[5] Galatians i. 6, 7.
[6] Birch, *Court and Times of James the First*, ii. 334.

promising foe ; and it is beyond doubt that this dread and dislike did, as a matter of fact, make for the spread of Puritanism among the ranks of the laity in the closing years of James's reign.[1]

Even for Puritanism among the clergy, however, circumstances provided a temporary respite. Death ended Bancroft's primacy in 1610, and his successor Abbot, to whom allusion has previously been made, was a man of different type. He made little mark. The times were hardly favourable to the working out of his ideals. So far as we can gather, it was upon the vision of an English Reformed Church linked with the Reformed Churches of the Continent that his eyes were fixed, much as Cranmer's eyes had been fixed upon it before. His Churchmanship was, if one may so put it, international rather than national. He was more concerned with religious interests on the wider scale than with disputes which had no significance beyond the English coasts. But though he sent representatives, or agreed with James to send them, to the Synod of Dort, at which the controversy between Calvinism and Arminianism was fought out to Calvinism's victory in 1619,[2] and though he attempted in this way to cement or preserve the connection between English Protestantism and Protestantism abroad, he accomplished no positive or constructive work. And the result of looking far away rather than near was that ecclesiastical affairs at home were allowed for the time to drift. We have noted how, during Abbot's tenure of office, some even of the Separatists summoned up sufficient courage to turn their faces homeward out of exile again.[3] Puritanism, also, gathered some measure of fresh hope ; though it is noteworthy, too, that a more kindly spirit on the part of Puritanism towards Separatism, and indeed a drift of the first towards the second, were beginning to show themselves [4]

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[1] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, ii. 128. Neal concludes, "Upon the whole, if we may believe Mr. Coke, the Puritan party had gathered so much strength and was in such reputation with the people, that they were more in number than all the other parties in the kingdom put together."

[2] There are two English translations of the account of the Synod's proceedings and findings—one by T. Scott, and a second by O. Jones. Some information as to the proceedings of the Synod is given in Dudley Carleton's *Letters*, pp. 345-368.

[3] *Supra*, p. 191. [4] *Ibid.*

—signs, perhaps, that Puritanism doubted whether after all its new-born hope would endure, and was looking for entire detachment from the Established Church as its only possible chance of continued existence in the land of its birth.   But throughout Abbot's Primacy the Puritans, whatever their secret thoughts may have been, enjoyed comparative rest. They can scarcely, indeed, be said to have become actually aggressive.   It was rather that some who had declared themselves persuaded, if not convinced, under Bancroft's argument and Bancroft's threats, and who, convinced or only persuaded, had conformed, fell away again when Bancroft had passed from the scene.   The Puritan atmosphere crept in once more into places from which it had been expelled ; so much so that in some places, as for instance in Lancashire, the Puritan party counted for a good deal.[1]   Elsewhere much the same thing went on ; for when Laud came to the Deanery of Gloucester in 1616, he found that, owing to the prevalence of the Puritan spirit, " scarce ever a church in England was so ill-governed and so out of order."[2]   "Lecture-ships "—under which a clergyman who found difficulty in making such perfect compliance with the law as would secure him a benefice was enabled both to obtain an income and to exercise the clerical office so far as preaching was concerned — became   numerous,   Abbot   himself,   indeed, favouring their establishment.   The system involved in these " Lectureships " had some connection with the " prophesyings " of earlier years—was, in fact, a survival of one of their elements.   Arrangements were made for a " Lecture " at stated intervals in market-towns and elsewhere, the " Lecturers " being sometimes maintained as private chaplains in the houses of noblemen and the gentry, or, in any event, financed out of private enterprise ; so that in this way a number of officially unrecognised preaching stations— which would naturally be kept in Puritan hands—came to be dotted over many parts of the map.[3]   And the recrudescence of Puritanism went far enough to bring out

[1] See Halley, *Lancashire, Its Puritanism and Nonconformity*, i. 225-255.

[2] These had been the King's words to Laud on the latter's appointment (Heylin, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, p. 69).

[3] Fletcher, *The Revival and Progress of Independency in England*, iii. 113, 114.

a strong protest when, on the revival of the controversy
concerning Sunday observance, James required the " Declara-
tion of Sports " to be read in all the pulpits of the land—on
which particular matter, it should be stated, Abbot took
sides against the King.[1]   So much, at least, in the way of
affording respite to Puritanism, resulted from the laxity
Abbot displayed.   It was upon " heresy," strictly so called,
that Abbot's anger chiefly fell.   Socinianism or Arianism—
which has dropped out of our sight for a while, but which
will in various forms ranging down to modern Unitarianism
claim our attention again, and which had always kept in
England some hiding-places of its own from the time we
last saw it down to the reign of James—had two martyrs
when Abbot held the reins of power.   Bartholomew Legate
was burned at Smithfield in 1612, Edward Wightman at
Burton-on-Trent in the same year ;[2] and a third sufferer
would have been added to the list had not public opinion
too loudly manifested its disapproval and disgust.[3]   It was
no objection, grounded on principle, to persecution that
kept Abbot back from pressing Puritanism hard.   " Mr.
Justice William was with me the other day," he writes in
cold-blooded style to the Lord Chancellor concerning Legate
and Wightman, " who maketh no doubt that the law is clear
to burn them."[4]   It was merely that his attention was
drawn in other directions, although in all probability the
recollection of some former Puritan leanings of his own
made him comparatively willing that his attention should
wander thus.[5]   By reason of Abbot's occupancy of the
Canterbury throne, the threats which James had uttered at
the commencement of his reign had at its close been but
partially fulfilled, and Puritanism had obtained at least a
respite, if not a reprieve.

That it was no reprieve, but only a respite, was soon
made clear.   The reign of Charles was only a few months

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[1] Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, x. 274.

[2] Fuller's Church History (ed. Brewer), v. 418-424.

[3] *Ibid.* v. 424.

[4] *Egerton Papers* (Camden Society), p. 448.   Abbot's two letters show
something like actual impatience that " these evil persons " should " receive the
recompense of their pride and impiety."

[5] Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, x. 245, 248, 249.

old when the dread certainty of what it was to bring settled upon the minds of men. The story is familiar. It need only be said here that James's autocratic mood became the spirit of tyranny in James's son, that James's impatience of contradiction was in Charles multiplied a hundredfold. As regards religious affairs, from the moment of Charles's accession in 1625 it was clear that the Church was to be sharply called to order, and that all irregularities were to have a sharp shrift. To Laud's disgust at the Puritanism of Gloucester we have just now referred ; and Laud was the man into whose hands the new King gave himself up. Laud was only Bishop of St. David's when the reign began ; but he arranged the ceremony of the Coronation in accordance with his own ideas,[1] displacing those by whom it should have been supervised ; and 1628 saw him—a brief tenure of the diocese of Bath and Wells having intervened—put in possession of the London see.[2] Laud was a fanatical believer in the Catholic idea. He was assuredly no Romanist in the ordinary sense. He had developed a strong anti-Roman argument against the Jesuit Fisher in the reign of James.[3] And when later on, Rome, erroneously thinking the time ripe, wanted to make him a Cardinal, he refused " till Rome were otherwise than it was." [4] But he was the first fore-runner of those who maintain the position that while the faults of the Roman Church may prevent present reunion, reunion is nevertheless to be looked forward to and desired, that a natural primacy in Christendom belongs to the Roman Bishop, and that even a corrupt Rome must consequently be spoken of with sympathetic respect rather than in tones of reproach. A general Council (which had from the beginning been Laud's specific) [5] might some day put things right. Meanwhile any accentuation of differences, if carried beyond the absolutely necessary point, became something worse than a mistake. Laud had travelled far beyond the merely

[1] For the Coronation, see *The Manner of the Coronation of King Charles the First*, edited by Bishop Wordsworth for the Henry Bradshaw Society.

[2] Heylin, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, pp. 159, 174, 184.

[3] In 1639 Laud issued his full *Relation of the Conference between William Laud and Mr. Fisher, the Jesuit*. See *Works* (Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology), vol. ii.

[4] Heylin, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, pp. 252, 253.

[5] *Works* (Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology), ii. 245 ff.

repressive policy of Parker and Whitgift, far beyond even Bancroft's "divine right of episcopacy" and the constructive ecclesiastical statesmanship whereby Bancroft had sought to solidify the English Church. Like Cranmer and Abbot, Laud had a very positive ideal—and an ideal which went further than a mere systematising of the existing Church. It was not the reorganisation of an existing Church, but the creation or re-creation of a Church as yet non-existent, at which he aimed. And the ideal of Cranmer and Abbot, positive as theirs had been, was utterly transcended by Laud's. It was a Reformed Church of Europe, standing over against the Church of Rome, to which they had looked : one Church in European Christendom might be set down as the formula of Laud. With perfect honesty he declared that he was no Romanist, whatever his enemies might say or suspect. The suspicion had in fact been entertained in Laud's Oxford days,[1] but a fair judgment must declare it false. But it is not enough to say that Laud's hope was "to vindicate the Anglican Church as a true branch of the episcopal and apostolic tree, and to invest it with prerogatives such as Rome exclusively claimed. . . . He wished to establish an Anglican Pope at Lambeth."[2] He aimed at more than this. He hoped for a time when once again the rent should be closed—and not only hoped for it, but thought its arrival a possible thing. And to minimise points of controversy is the natural policy for a man by whom that possibility is entertained.

That Puritanism should be specially hated by such a man causes no surprise, for Puritanism was taking the Church of England further and further from the goal on which his heart was set. On doctrinal (for Laud was an Arminian)[3] and on all other grounds he would feel forced to fight it to the death. On the other hand, it was only to be expected that in the advent to influence of a man like Laud, the Puritans should read signs that their cause was doomed. They might quite reasonably, albeit mistakenly, suspect the sincerity of Laud's non-Romanist professions. They saw

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[1] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, i. 61, 62.

[2] Allon, *Congregational Union Jubilee Lectures*, i. 102, 103.

[3] From this time onward the doctrinal divergence which had set in with Bound's book can be looked on as complete. An Arminian Anglicanism and a Calvinistic Puritanism stood face to face (*supra*, p. 244).

that conversions to Rome were multiplying,[1] and would find
in that fact proof that Laud was really, notwithstanding all
his disclaimers, doing Rome's work, and probably doing it
with delight.   And they would quite rightly feel that in
Laud's scheme of things there was even less place for them
than in the scheme which Parker, Whitgift, and Bancroft
had fathered or entertained.   Moreover, the development of
events in the early years of Charles's reign, both on its
political and religious sides, was such as either to rouse the
Puritan spirit to fierce opposition or else to drive it to despair.
The suspicions which had been entertained in the case of
James—suspicions that his faith was in reality that of Rome
—were revived and intensified in the case of Charles.   The
earlier negotiations for Charles's marriage to a princess of
Spain were not forgotten ; and although these had failed, to
the nation's joy, it was to a French Roman Catholic bride
that Charles was married three days after he came to the
throne,[2] the coming of the bride of course meaning the
coming of Roman Catholic priests and servants in her train,
and all this deepening the suspicions of not a few that the
High Churchism of both Laud and his royal master was
only Romanism under a thin disguise.   Meanwhile—and
the fact carries us over to the political aspect of the matter
—the High Church clergy whom Charles raised to the
highest places—Laud himself and men like Manwaring and
Sibthorpe [3]—preached absolute power as the monarch's right,
perfect and unquestioning obedience, be the circumstances
what they might, as the subject's duty, so that those who
contended for religious and for civil freedom were driven to
stand shoulder to shoulder more closely even than in the
time of James.   And when by 1629 (so swiftly did the
situation declare itself, so swiftly did the character and policy
of Charles grow clear) it might have been evident to discern-
ing eyes that the cause of civil freedom was not going to
conquer without resistance even unto blood, striving against

[1] May, *History of the Long Parliament* (ed. 1854), p. 25.   For the views
of some Catholic missioners as to the prospects of Romanism in England at
this time, see Butler, *Historical Memoirs of The English, Irish, and Scottish
Catholics* (3rd ed.), ii. 321, 322, 337, 338.

[2] She was sister of the French King, and daughter of the Huguenot Henry
of Navarre.   The marriage treaty is in *Somers Tracts* (ed. Scott), iv. 85-91.

[3] Gardiner, *History of England from 1603 to 1642*, vi. 206, 208, 209.

the arbitrariness of royal power, it is little wonder that the distinctly religious wing of the Puritan-patriot alliance began to find its heart failing it for fear.   It is true that the extremity of Laudian pressure did not come into play till a few years later on.   But if one is at first inclined to find something of suddenness in that turning of Puritanism's eyes to the New World which now began, one sees with no more than brief reflection that the dropping down of the hands of some of the Puritans, the quick gesture of hopelessness, was not so sudden as it appears.   At any rate, sudden as it may have been in itself, it was but the natural climax to a long period of strain.   Puritanism had rebounded over and over again from the earth to which it had been smitten ; but there comes a time, if the smitting hand remains unweakened, when all power of resiliency is lost.   After the continued hostility of Parker and Whitgift, the closing years of Elizabeth's reign had indeed brought some measure of repose.   But the new hopes which had sprung up in the heart of Puritanism by the time James came to the throne had been ruthlessly blighted under the winds of Bancroft's scorn.   Then, when the comparative moderation of Abbot's rule had once more encouraged the Puritans to lift up their heads, had come the fresh outburst of the spirit of tyranny, religious and political, in Charles's early years, and all the signs foretelling a renewal of the storm.   The Puritans knew that at the very outset Laud, the King's chosen counsellor in religious affairs, had given to the sovereign two lists of the English clergy, one marked " O " for " Orthodox " and a second " P " for " Puritan "—the list to be used by Charles when matters of ecclesiastical promotion were in hand.[1] They saw the services of the Church changed toward the Roman way.   They saw Laud, the incarnation of the anti-Puritan spirit, moved to the London bishopric, and had every reason to suppose that Abbot's death would see him transferred to the highest place of all.   It was of course no secret that, as Gardiner puts it, " Every man who was at issue with Puritanism knew that he could count upon a favourable hearing if he poured his complaints into the ear of the Bishop of London, and that the Bishop of London was sure of a

[1] Heylin, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, p. 133.

favourable hearing from the King."[1]   The Puritans might
well lose heart.   Even the entanglement of the religious
cause with the political, inevitable as it was, might add to
their perplexities, and make them feel that out of the confused
welter of issues no thoroughly satisfactory solution could
emerge.   And it may be that, added to all else, was a
growing conviction (we have seen some signs of it, or what
may be read as signs of it, in the kindlier feeling shown by
the Puritans towards the Separatists, and in the passing over
of some from the first to the second) that the situation of
Puritanism was in reality an impossible one, and that within
the English Church Puritanism could not expect to find a
home.   This was—as one can now see—a natural develop-
ment for Puritan feeling to follow ; and once it had reached
a certain point, an increase of hostile pressure from the
outside might well enter into alliance with the mood within,
the latter thus growing more definitely conscious of itself,
and both together impelling Puritanism to withdraw.   Look-
ing all round the case, one can feel no strong surprise that,
after about five years of Charles's reign had passed, Puritanism
was being seized upon by an irresistible impression of defeat.

It is not our task to follow the Puritans, any more than
it was our task to follow the Independents, to their new
home across the sea.   A few sentences will serve to state
the facts which call for statement here.   Of the Puritan
consciousness of failure the emigration of 1629 and 1630
may be taken as the visible sign—for Puritanism, like
Separatism, at last sought refuge out in the western world.
It was not the largest emigration ; and as subsequent events
show, not all the Puritans had thrown up their hands.   And
those who had done so, and who by their departure acknow-
ledged the completeness of their surrender, did so with
something like a slow reluctance, almost, it could fairly be
put, with so many backward glances that an observer might
have been pardoned for wondering whether after all they
were not coming back to the ground they had professed to
leave.   That, at least, is the impression one receives as one
stands and watches them disappear on the seas—though
indeed (for there was no real hesitancy) only then.   Looking

[1] *History of England from 1603 to 1642*, vii. 128.

back from the vessel's stern as the English coasts faded, Mr.
Higginson, one of the leaders, said, "We will not say, as the
Separatists were wont to say at their leaving of England,
'Farewell, Babylon; farewell, Rome'; but we will say,
'Farewell, dear England, farewell the Church of God in
England, and all the Christian friends there!'"[1]   But there
was really a stern resolve behind the tears.   The situation
had been rightly reckoned up, the portents rightly read, the
decree accepted.   The first Puritan emigrants to America
knew well what was to be more than once proved as the
years went on—that the Church of England could give no
permanent shelter to those in whom the Puritan spirit was
supreme.

The emigration has been doubly dated as that of 1629
and 1630.   As a matter of fact, what may be called an
advance expedition—to which Higginson's ship belonged—
went out in the first-named year, but the more important
section started in the following spring.   Of this John
Winthrop was the principal figure;[2] and many of the
emigrants, like Winthrop himself, were men of family,
position, and culture.   The entire scheme had been
thoroughly thought out.   Capital had been provided:
companies had been formed: the sympathies of Parliamentary
leaders like Sir John Eliot and Hampden had been enlisted;[3]
and everything possible had been done to make the
beginnings of a settlement which might well grow into a
nation.   How seriously Puritanism regarded its case all this
may help us to understand.   This was no random or
casual affair.   It was the making of a far-stretching future—
not the satisfying of a temporary mood.   Yet beneath all
the business arrangements, religion was the chief concern,
and religion, of course, of the type for whose sake the exiles
were quitting their native land.   The new colony in
Massachusetts was, as might be expected from the circum-
stances under which it was born, to be distinctly Puritan.
It is worth noticing, however, that under the stress of
circumstances Puritans and Independents, once foreign

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[1] Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, i. 362; also *Life of Francis
Higginson*, by Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 29.
[2] Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, i. 119.
[3] Forster's *Life of Eliot* (2nd ed.), ii. 305, 306.

shores had received them, drew together in spite of the
differences which had parted them before.   Puritanism
might be anxious to dissociate itself theoretically from
Separatism, but the spirit of hostility which was weakening
in England was not likely to maintain itself unimpaired
abroad.   It was not long before communication was set up
between the new settlers and the old.   The experience
which the Separatist settlers from Leyden had gained
during their ten years' residence was of utmost value to—
and was freely placed at the disposal of—the new-comers :
in the end both parties contributed in worthy emulation to
the building up of the new land ; and outstanding as is the
date 1620 in the history of the American nation, equally
outstanding is the date 1630, when the Puritans followed in
the Separatist track of ten years before.

To the date named, then, we have traced the progress
of Nonconformity within the Established Church, as we
previously traced the progress of Nonconformity outside.
Before passing on, what else, in this connection, is it
necessary to say ?

Against this internal Nonconformity generally—and
chiefly, though objectors themselves may not definitely make
the distinction implied, against that branch of it which
properly bears the Puritan name—objection under two heads
is usually made.   Its piety is held to have been of the
fantastically unctuous, not to say hypocritical, type ; and it
is further charged with having preached and practised
hostility to culture, to business, to affairs, to pleasure even
of mild and moderate kind, in fact to everything outside
religion in the narrowest sense of the word.   And though
much has been done to weaken mistaken impressions of
this kind, and though it is impossible, besides, to examine
the case at length, it is the historian's part at least to
indicate the lines on which an investigation might be made,
the directions in which evidence may be sought.

That Puritanism stood for piety, for religion, in a very
real sense, is not to be denied.   No one, indeed, would
wish to deny it ; for in the very fact lies Puritanism's glory.
Puritanism aimed at " goodness in itself."   It was a protest

against a religious formalism which set rites, ceremonies, hierarchies, and their subservient recognition, in place of a real spiritual culture.   But we have found nothing, as we have traced its history thus far, to give colour to the accusation of hypocrisy, of unctuousness, of the sort of religious dementia (for that, if not something worse, is what the accusation amounts to) to which Puritanism is sometimes supposed to have fallen a prey.   And we have found nothing for the very good reason that there is nothing. It is easy to fasten upon an allusion in Shakespeare [1] and to take it as showing that Puritanism was held synonymous with religious ostentation and self-conceit—when in point of fact the passage shows that, whatever uninstructed opinion in certain circles may have done, Shakespeare himself did not take it so.[2]   It is easy to fasten upon the pictures of Puritans drawn by novelists and satirists, ancient or modern, and to take them as typical—when in point of fact they are but extremely accentuated portraits of extreme individuals, not attached to or exemplifying, but only mimicking, the Puritan school—really caricatures of caricatures.   Caricature has in fact always been, both in earlier and in later times, a ready weapon against the Puritan type. That mere sincerity of religion, quite apart from anything that could be called fanaticism, was sufficient to stir many on-lookers to scorn, is evident from Baxter's account of the position in his youthful days.   " When I heard them speak scornfully of others as Puritans whom I never knew, I was at first apt to believe all the lies and slanders wherewith they loaded them.   But when I heard my own Father so reproached, and perceived the drunkards were forwardest in the reproach, I perceived that it was mere malice.   For my father never scrupled Common Prayer or Ceremonies, nor spake against Bishops, nor ever so much as prayed but by a book or form, being not even acquainted then with any that

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[1] For instance, in *Twelfth Night*, Act II. Scene iii., Malvolio is said by Mary to be " a kind of Puritan."

[2] For Mary, having said that Malvolio is but a *kind* of Puritan, goes on presently, " The devil a Puritan that he is, or anything constantly, but a time-pleaser ; an affectioned ass, that cons state without book, and utters it by great swaths : the best persuaded of himself, so crammed, as he thinks, with excellencies, that it is his ground of faith, that all that look on him love him." (*Ibid.*)   These, therefore, were *not* the true Puritan " notes."

did otherwise. But only for reading Scripture when the rest were dancing on the Lord's Day, and for praying (by a form out of the end of the Common Prayer Book) in his house, and for reproving drunkards and swearers, and for talking sometimes a few words of Scripture and the life to come, he was reviled commonly by the name of Puritan, Precisian, and hypocrite ; and so were the godly conformable ministers that lived anywhere in the country near us, not only by our neighbours but by the common talk of the vulgar rabble of all about us." [1] As against sincerity of religion, this has ever been, and probably will ever be, the mouthing of each successive hour. But of real evidence for such charges there is none. If one finds spiritual passion, spiritual aspiration, the consciousness of the overwhelming importance of the soul's relations with God, in Puritan utterances, one finds nothing like a mere holy-sounding twang, a mere religious-seeming style insincerely put on ; and spiritual passion with its concomitants is surely not a thing of which any man or party need be ashamed. It emerges, indeed, in some men of the anti-Puritan school who are among the saintly heroes of the world, though it can scarcely be termed the school's distinguishing mark— emerging there, as it does, rather in spite of than because of the main position taken up. But when it does emerge there, as in men like Bishop Andrewes, no one thinks of raising a sneer. And the spiritual passion in Puritanism is sufficiently akin in all essential things, notwithstanding certain slight differences in expression (even those not being always discernible) to save it from the sneer which spiritual passion in the anti-Puritan school is never thought to merit. Some sentences of Wallington's may stand as examples of Puritanism's voice in the hours when Puritanism set itself to close and intimate dealing with spiritual concerns. " I would of myself," he writes, " I would of myself run in all haste apace even a gallop to Heaven. But now I find it by woeful experience that I am entangled, and have laid too heavy a burden upon myself, that I am not able to bear, in so much that my going to heaven hath been like unto Pharaoh's chariots when the wheels were struck off, they

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[1] *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, part i. pp. 2-3.

went heavily and slowly, so that they drove them with much ado ; even so hath my Christian walk been to heaven, slowly and with much ado, so that now at last I must lay down all and say (with the poor publican) 'the good Lord be merciful to me a sinner.' " [1]   This is piety, of course—piety wrought to intense heat and fervour.   But whoso scorns or sneers, *ipso facto* proves himself unable and unworthy to judge.   And in this utterance of a Puritan soul communing with itself we catch echoes of the tone which we have heard in other and more public Puritan utterances at various times since the Puritan voice was raised.   Puritanism was spiritually passionate and eager : it was none the less sincere, restrained, and sane.   It was an aspiration, but not an intoxication.   It did not pose with an eye to its own effect upon men—it was the passionate but deliberately adopted quest of an ideal.

The charge of Puritanism's hostility to culture, affairs, and pleasure, falls equally quickly to the ground.   Of course Puritanism lay under the disadvantage whereby any party in opposition is always beset.   Extremists avow the principles of such a party, hang upon its skirts and claim alliance, make a larger noise than the party itself in the ears of the world ; and the world, not able and perhaps not very willing to discriminate, straightway identifies the opposition party with its exaggerating wings.   It was quite easy—in a sense quite in the natural order of things—for the seriousness of essential Puritanism to become something like asceticism with not a few, for its religious passion to stretch itself into a despising of what might be called the spiritually profitless wisdom of the world, for its realisation of the supreme importance of spiritual interests to develop, with those who possessed no restraining instinct of proportion, into aloofness from common human affairs.   But such excesses were not of Puritanism's essence ; for Puritanism was no detailed programme of morality and conduct, surveying all the different conjunctions of practical life and prescribing the correct method for each : it concerned itself with the underlying spirit out of which all action was to come rather than

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[1] Wallington's *Historical Notices of Events occurring chiefly in the Reign of Charles I.,* i. 13-24.

with the *minutiæ* of actions themselves ; and if any chose to
shift the accent to the wrong place, and, having done so, to
lapse into the moral and spiritual grotesqueness which in-
evitably follows from beginning at the wrong end of a moral
and spiritual programme, it is they, not the Puritanism
they caricatured, that must take the blame. Puritanism, at
any rate, has sufficiently numerous and sufficiently shining
examples of its entire practical sanity to claim a verdict—as,
indeed, dispassionate observers admit. " The Puritan gentle-
man," says Professor Dowden, " might surprise a nineteenth-
century drawing-room by certain peculiarities of manner and
speech, but he would not offend by brutal license. His
temper might be grave rather than buoyantly gay, but he
would possess within certain springs of happiness which
do not sap the genuine joy of human life." [1] In Mrs.
Hutchinson's account of Colonel Hutchinson, her husband,
we have first-hand testimony as to the compatibility of
Puritanism with gladness of spirit from one who was in
closest relations with a Puritan mind. Puritan of the
Puritans Colonel Hutchinson assuredly was ; for, as his wife
observes, " Piety being still the bond of all his other virtues,
there was nothing he durst not do or suffer, but sin against
God." [2] Yet he dwelt in the sun, using without abusing the
lighter things of life. " His whole life," the record goes on,
" was the rule of temperance in meat, drink, apparel, pleasure,
and all those things that may be lawfully enjoyed ; and
herein his temperance was more excellent than in others, in
whom it is not so much a virtue, but proceeds from want of
appetite or gust of pleasure : in him it was a true, wise, and
religious government of the desire and delight he took in the
things he enjoyed. He had a certain activity of spirit which
could never endure idleness either in himself or others, and
that made him eager, for the time he indulged it, as well
in pleasure as in business." [3] For the relation between
Puritanism and culture, we may recall that Henry Smith,
who, according to Fuller,[4] was known to common repute as
" the silver-tongued preacher," was one of the lights of the

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[1] *Puritan and Anglican*, p. 21.
[2] *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson* (ed. Firth, 1906), p. 27.
[3] *Ibid.* i. 49.　　　[4] Preface (p. 4) to Fuller's edition of Smith's *Sermons.*

Puritan pulpit in Elizabethan times, people of education and position crowding St. Clement Danes to hear him—that Thomas Adams, another preacher of the reigns of James and Charles, seemed to Southey to merit the title of "the prose Shakespeare of Puritan theologians"[1]—and that Edmund Spenser thought enough of Puritanism to make Grindal, under the anagram of "Algrind," one of the sympathetically-drawn characters of his verse.[2] It must be remembered, in regard to the destruction of pictures and altars in the Churches during the Civil War, that this was due principally to the austere spirit of Presbyterianism (the laying of it to Puritanism's charge comes from that confusion of Puritanism with Presbyterianism which leads to so many other confusions of praise and blame), or to the hot temper of Cromwell's soldiers, for whom all such things were inseparably linked with a system of religious tyranny which it was their business to destroy. It was not from essential Puritanism that the iconoclastic spirit sprang. Nor is there warrant for supposing that by true Puritanism the ordinary business affairs of life were held common or unclean. In fact, precisely the reverse is the case. To quote Professor Dowden again—" It is a mistake to suppose that such a faith as theirs should weaken or impair activity in mundane affairs. Not through sacred symbol, not through the glories or the pomps of art was their faith to find an outward manifestation, but through their conduct and public action."[3] Sir John Eliot, whose patriotism grew more and more fervent from his first appearance upon the political stage in James' Parliament of 1614 through the stirring drama of the reign of Charles, needs no defence against a charge of lassitude in public affairs. Yet Eliot was a Puritan. " To him," says his biographer, " the Bible was, in truth and in fact, the book of life ; from which he derived all that was essential to religion, and by which he measured everything worthiest of honour in public or in private concerns."[4] Rather curiously, the same biographer goes on, " He was not a Puritan ; but all his sympathies went strongly with the

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[1] Quoted by Dr. John Brown in the preface to the selection from Adams' Sermons edited by him for the Cambridge University Press.

[2] *The Shephcard's Calendar : July.*   [3] *Puritan and Anglican*, p. 23.

[4] *Forster's Life of Sir John Eliot* (2nd ed.), i. 6.

pure in faith and worship to which the term was applied." [1]
The distinction is so absolutely without a difference as to
lose its force ; and Eliot—who in his turn was but the type
of a good many more—undoubtedly stands out as an
example of the Puritan spirit translating itself into an earnest
and unflinching participation in the immediate concerns of
the immediate world.   In truth, the sour-visaged Puritan,
contemning pleasure, despising letters and art, and wrapping
his cloak around him in haughty aloofness as he walked the
ways of men, exists in fancy rather than in fact ; and in so
far as he exists in fact, he is exceptional, not typical at all.
With all its intense piety, Puritanism at its normal level
(and examples enough have been adduced to show it) was
appreciative of and sympathetic towards all that was best
and worthiest, however far outside the distinctly religious
realm it might lie, and in no wise forbade its votaries—
rather impelled them—to stand shoulder to shoulder with
their fellows under the burden and heat of the private and
public working day.

On the question of " internal " Nonconformity as a
manifestation of the true Nonconformist spirit, a verdict is
easily reached.   The general verdict has, in fact, been
anticipated in what was said at an earlier stage.[2]   Puritanism
in the stricter sense was, and Presbyterianism in the stricter
sense was not, an effort at the realisation of the true Non-
conformist ideal.   That the distinctly Presbyterian pro-
paganda, taken as a whole, cannot be looked upon as such a
manifestation, is abundantly clear.   When Presbyterianism,
through the voices or the pens of Cartwright, Travers, and
their colleagues, contend for the establishment of the Genevan
system as the one thing—or at least the first thing—
demanded by the interests of religion, we are not within
sound of a call to make organisation secondary to, and the
product of, life : the call is still for the establishment of an
organisation on which life is supposed to depend ; and it is
not the Nonconformist spirit that can be credited with the
authorship of a call like this.   But with Puritanism the case
is different.   Caring above all things for spiritual ideals,

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[1] *Forster's Life of Sir John Eliot* (2nd ed.), i. 6.
[2] *Supra*, pp. 212-214.

and setting themselves for the sake of those ideals against
the imposition upon them of an organisation which claimed
to be the first thing in order of importance, the Puritans
assuredly embodied the Nonconformist protest in some
degree.   For it was precisely against the exaltation of
organisation over life that their voices were lifted up.

But the protest did not, so to say, fully realise its own
grounds ; and the Puritans were in the grip of a spirit
which they did not perfectly understand.   Their exaltation
of life over organisation was—one may put it so—instinctive
rather than deliberate and conscious.   They hardly formulated
that exaltation to themselves—hardly spelt it out—as being
their programme.   And they did not, in consequence,
recognise what such a formulation would have involved.
The Nonconformist spirit did indeed strive to make Puritan-
ism—as with fuller, though by no means complete, success
it strove to make Independency—an opening whereby to
break into the iron ring of system and order which shut it
out : but Puritanism, although conscious of the force pressing
it up against the barriers, scarcely realised its nature or the
precise direction whence it came.   The sense of friction was
felt here, the counter-push there, as Puritanism was swept
up towards the strong-built fences.   But the various ex-
periences of an unpliable environment or of an adverse
power which challenged in its turn were not correlated, not
traced back to their ultimate unifying reason in the nature
of that unseen spirit which was seeking to make Puritanism
its minister, not viewed as the inevitable outcome from the
clash of two contending principles—and therefore, since they
failed to suggest clearly what lay behind them, failed also to
suggest any clear-cut programme for what lay before.   The
Independents, as we have seen,[1] at least grasped the Non-
conformist *theory* in its fulness ; for they insisted that all
Church order and system should be Christ working Himself
out, as it were, through the members of His Church ; and
even if they were not entirely faithful to their own theory,
appreciation of it enabled them to make some approximation
towards the Nonconformist ideal.   But the Puritans had not
rightly taken their bearings, and worked in the dark.   Their

[1] *Supra*, p. 201.

protest against the existing system was fragmentary, wrought out in what may be almost termed fits and starts—even ejaculatory would hardly be too strong a word—rather than reasoned out from a definite starting-point to a definite end. Hence the inconsistent position which all through they sought to maintain : hence the attempt to remain, while chafing against the supremacy of the idea of organisation, members of a Church with which the idea of organisation was avowedly supreme : hence their failure to perceive that a Church ordered under the authority of the secular power must in the nature of things be at war with the spirit by which they themselves were animated and driven ; and hence, too, we may add with utmost probability of truth, their failure and defeat. Such a protest as theirs, made honestly and even passionately as it was, was bound—just because it was made from within the Church—either to go further or to die away. It was but a half-way house in which the Nonconformist spirit could not consent—and for that matter would not be allowed—to sojourn long. In another sense than that of the original utterance, Puritanism knew not what manner of spirit it was of. It failed to realise what its own action meant. And when we enquire how, during the period which our survey of Nonconformity had covered, the true Nonconformist spirit fared, we have to add to a first statement that in Independency the Nonconformist spirit found a genuine but partial manifestation, the further statement that in Puritanism the Nonconformist spirit found a manifestation equally genuine indeed so far as it went, but, insomuch as it was instinctive and spasmodic rather than fully conscious of itself and clearly " looking before and after," more partial still.

CHAPTER II

THE LAUDIAN DECADE

AUTHORITIES.—The general history of the period may be studied in Gardiner's *History of England from* 1603 *to* 1642, also in Masson's *Life of Milton*, which is an invaluable and exhaustive study of the time, though its arrangement is sometimes a little confusing. Lingard is also specially useful. *Clarendon's History of the Rebellion* has many faults of suppression and misrepresentation, but is interesting as giving the view of a royalist partisan. Mr. G. M. Trevelyan's *England under The Stuarts* (in the *History of England* edited by Oman) brings out the essential features of the decade with vividness. On the distinctly religious and ecclesiastical side, we have Neal, Collier, Fuller, and Hutton as before. Mr. Hutton has a separate monograph on Laud. But for Laud and his work it is necessary, in order to gain really full knowledge and understanding, to study Laud's own works, specially his *Diary*, as well as Heylin's *Cyprianus Anglicus*. Hanbury's *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents* gives lengthy analyses of the principal works in the controversies between the Independents and their opponents, and the principal facts of Independent history at the time. For the latter, however, Waddington's *Congregational History* is a more generous source. For the Baptists, see Crosby's *History of the English Baptists*, Evans' *Early English Baptists*, Ivimey's *History of the English Baptists*, and the valuable little book by Mr. Shakespeare alluded to in the text. Events in Scotland may be found dealt with at length in Hetherington's *History of the Church of Scotland*.

THE years from 1630 to 1640 make a period which may fitly be called the Laudian decade. It was not, indeed, till 1633 that Laud reached the supreme place in the hierarchy ;[1] but as Bishop of London he was actually, though not nominally, as much the first prelate of the Church as when he sat upon Canterbury throne. Abbot lived out the last years of his Primacy and of his life under the shadow of the King's displeasure : in many instances he was forced, under the pressure of Laud's masterfulness, acting either directly or through Charles, to adopt a procedure of which he personally disapproved ; so that when his death cleared the way for Laud, men saw only the outward and

[1] Heylin, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, pp. 250, 251.

visible sign of a previously existing, if hitherto inward and
invisible, fact. The Laudian decade, therefore, these years
may be termed. It is, of course, when we have ecclesiastical
affairs most in mind that the term is primarily applicable ;
but even in regard to matters of general policy the use of it
is nearly, if not quite, as just. True, when the Commons
roused themselves to vengeance, it was against Strafford,
rather than against Laud, that their fiercest anger burned—
at any rate Strafford was the first culprit of the two to
be sent to the block. And probably Strafford, rather than
Laud, is commonly regarded as the evil genius of the time.
But the reason of the special resentment felt against Strafford
by those who contended for liberty lay in the fact that
Strafford, as Wentworth, had himself been enrolled in
liberty's cause, had set his signature to the Petition of Right,
and had afterwards advocated and extenuated its violation.
How much of sincerity his earlier defence of freedom may
have possessed it is difficult to say. There is good reason
for suspecting that not conviction or principle, but slights
from the Court and from the Court's favourite, had thrown
him for the time being into the opposition ranks. But that
did not alter the fact that he had become an apostate now,
and that he was traitor as well as foe. Against Strafford
anger might well be heated seven times. As a matter of
fact, however, it was on the other side of the Irish Sea that
Wentworth's policy of " Thorough " was for the most part
carried out ; and though, during his Lord-Lieutenancy there,
he was incessantly using voice and pen to spur on Laud and
the King to yet sterner measures, it was not till towards
the close of the decade that he returned to breathe his spirit
at closer quarters upon the movement of affairs. Laud
lived and moved upon the principal theatre of action all the
while. Not only in matters ecclesiastical, but in general
policy, he was the King's trusted and confidential adviser,
the true keeper of the King's conscience (if such a phrase be
not too wide of the mark), the real power behind the throne.
Secular as well as spiritual policy had in him its source and
spring ; and it is upon Laud that the lines of action Charles
adopted, when traced back from circumference to centre,
are found to converge. It was the Laudian decade.

The aim which Laud kept constantly before him has already been pointed out. It is only in the light of that aim, and of his absorbing devotion to it, that his character can be judged. As to his character generally, one needs to be careful lest judgment grow—as it easily may—too severe. It is true that now and then the opposite danger has been incurred : the operation of washing a generally unadmired character with white has been performed upon Laud as upon others ; and when we find Bishop Creighton [1] calling Laud "large-minded and tolerant," although " he was prepared to use intolerance as a means of establishing a system of tolerance "—or when we find Mr. Gladstone declaring that he finds Laud " the most tolerant Churchman of that time " [2]—it is hardly as serious judgments that the utterances can be received. But on the other hand, hostile verdicts have also gone too far, or have at any rate been framed along mistaken lines. Conscious and deliberate cruelty, and the enjoyment of it, have come to be stock charges against Laud's account. The story of how, when Leighton's shameful sentence was pronounced, Laud lifted his cap and thanked God, though quite unsupported by reliable evidence, has so linked itself with Laud's name that it has come to be with many as a sort of index-finger pointing to Laud's permanent mood.[3] And it must be confessed that a great many of Laud's acts, looked at merely in isolation, give colour to the common charge. Even if the story alluded to had been well authenticated one would not have felt much surprise. Yet one has to reckon with the fact that Laud's writings prove him to have been a genuinely religious man. It is easy to mock, as Macaulay mocks,[4] at some of the passages which the *Diary* contains — passages which merely indicate that Laud was possessed by some of the superstitious notions current in his time, but which say nothing at all as to his character one way or the other. There are many of another kind. Laud's " Devotions " and

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[1] *Life of Creighton*, ii. 336.

[2] Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, iii. 480.

[3] Leighton himself makes the statement in his account of the trial (*Epitome, or Brief Description, of Dr. Leighton's Troubles*, p. 78). But this was written years after, and is in any case quite inconclusive.

[4] *Essay on Nugent's Memorials of Hampden.*

" Prayers " breathe piety of a real and profound type.
" Lord, I have received this Sacrament of the Body and
Blood of my dear Saviour.   His mercy hath given it, and
my faith hath received it into my soul.   I humbly beseech
Thee to speak mercy and peace unto my conscience, and
enrich me with all the graces which come from that precious
Body and Blood, even till I be possessed of eternal life in
Christ." [1]   " Gracious Father, the life of a man is a warfare
upon earth, and the dangers which assault us are diversely
pointed against us.   I humbly beseech Thee, be present
with me in all the course and passages of my life ; but
especially in the services of my calling." [2]   " O eternal God
and merciful Father, with whom do rest the souls of them
that die in Thy faith and favour, have mercy upon us, and
grant that my life may be a preparation to die, and my
death an entrance to life with Thee." [3]   Passages like
these (and they occur everywhere) are real evidence for
the existence in this man of a spirit truly devout.   What-
ever Laud did, he conceived himself to be doing God
service : and this is at least an extenuation, though ad-
mittedly nothing more.   To estimate Laud aright, one
must escape from what was Laud's own besetting fault—
narrowness and restraint of view.   He saw nothing in the
whole world except that unified Church of England which,
as a preliminary to a Church whose unity should be still
more widely stretching, he desired to set up.   And he was
of that type of nature in which concentration upon one
object induces, not simply heedlessness of other things, but
a sense that other things have no real existence at all.
Human beings are viewed by such a nature as this, not *as*
human beings, but as insensible and depersonalised pieces
wherewith the game is to be played, or, more aptly, as tools
wherewith the work is to be done.   He was a chosen vessel
unto God ; and that fact gave him a right over everybody
and over all.   Ordinary considerations did not apply :
ordinary tests were out of place.   He was cruel, but—if the
psychological paradox probably involved in the saying may
pass—he was cruel without knowing it, without intention,

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[1] *Works* (Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology), iii. 75.
[2] *Ibid.* iii. 47.   [3] *Ibid.* iii. 80.

without considering, or owning any obligation to consider, the emotion, physical or moral, produced by his action in those upon whom it impinged. It is all terrible enough. On the whole, it is as terrible an indictment as—perhaps an even more terrible indictment than—that of deliberate cruelty would have been. It is terrible enough that a man should delude himself into supposing that such a position could rightly be occupied, or such authority rightly be used, by any human being. But so it was. And it is on these lines that a judgment of Laud must run. A narrow intellect, intensely concentrated—a small soul, passionately fired—an egoistic sense of a divine calling which not only allowed, but required, that he should stand with his feet upon the neck of his world and all it contained—these things make for us a Laud, so absolutely separated from all other men that they cease to be men in his eyes. He forgets even the fact there has been any separation ; and what others desire or suffer is of course no concern of a nature such as this. For a Laud, the point simply does not arise. And in drawing inferences as to Laud's character from his actions upon the political field (to pass to another but a kindred point), the same thing must be borne in mind. Behind all Laud's political activity the one all-absorbing purpose lay. "He was practically both Primate and Prime Minister,"[1] and was really responsible for much of the King's worst wrong. As one has said, "It was in great part to the indiscreet zeal of a Mitred Head, that had got an Ascendant over his Master's Conscience and Councils, that both the Monarchy and the Hierarchy owed afterwards their fall."[2] But Laud supported or inspired the absolutism of Charles because he saw that only in this way could he secure that absolutism in the Church which was indispensable to the carrying out of his plans. In political intrigue he was largely concerned. But he was no more a political intriguer for intrigue's sake than he was cruel for cruelty's sake. The first impression may be otherwise. It has been

[1] Blaxland, *The Struggle with Puritanism*, p. 53. Mr. Blaxland's immediate point is that even before Laud's elevation to Canterbury the case was so. But the remark aptly sums up the entire period.

[2] Welwood's *Memoirs of the Most Material Transactions in England, etc.* (ed. 1820), p. 37.

truly written of him, " The secret ramifications of political
life now begin to spread, and his feelers extend over the
ground, touch here and there, and find out this man and the
other.   Connections widen underground, and a mysterious
world of acquaintance forms, and we explore with him the
parts behind the scenes of the political stage.   Alphabetical
personages appear in the pages of his Diary.   E. B. and
C. D., A. H. and S., and T., with whom he has interviews,
private engagements, compacts, pledges given and taken,
and an issue awaited. . . . His course to the last is
perpetually dropping under ; or retiring behind a screen, or
sounding some depth, or following some cavernous winding." [1]
But it is hardly so correct to say, as the same author does
say in the middle of the passage, that " a taste for the
Eleusinian chambers and hidden strata of statesmanship is
a characteristic of Laud."   It was not so much a matter of
taste as a matter of using certain means—which to the
user had no taste at all, whether pleasant or unpleasant—
for the achievement of a dominating aim.   Laud is rightly
understood both on the political and religious sides of his
work when he is conceived as having no care whatever for
persons or things in themselves, as hardly being aware of
their existence, as scarcely crediting the first with conscious-
ness or the second with actuality, and as therefore standing
in a sense quite outside the world.   This was the man he
was, and this was the man on whom, through the troublous
and tumultuous decade, the King leant as his inspirer and
guide.

    That in the end Laud's methods hastened the defeat of
Laud's own ends is a commonplace of history.   To tyrannical
policy he imparted such consistency and forcefulness that
the nation came to realise the better what a tyrannical policy
really meant, and roused itself all the sooner and all the
more.   Laud's utter heedlessness, or rather his utter uncon-
sciousness, of what men were feeling was precisely the thing
most fitted to heat men's feeling to the point at which it must
turn from anger to strenuous opposition and counter-stroke,
or even to revenge.   His whole procedure was, one might
say, like thrusting against a spiral spring, the superlative

    [1] Mozley, *Essays Historical and Theological*, i. 133.

violence of the thrust producing a similarly superlative violence of recoil. Yet to say that Laud's methods brought about their user's undoing and defeat is by no means to tell all the tale. Any one who desires can find good ground for saying that, beaten down as he was, Laud had his revenge. From the subsequent political history of the country (to note that point first) not even the axe sufficed to loosen the pressure of his hand. It is as if not for many years—not till the Revolution of 1688—could that close-enfolding grasp be shaken off. For the excess of Laud's tyranny brought about that set of circumstances in which the party of liberty found it necessary to purchase the aid of its Scotch allies by admitting Presbyterianism to an influence which became predominance ere long : then, the resulting arrangements having been found no solution at all of the political problem, but rather a perpetuation of former grievances in varied shape, the personal rule of Oliver Cromwell stepped in as being the sole remedy to which the hour's chaos would yield : afterwards, with Cromwell gone from the scene, and no one having learned his spell before he went, came the setting in of chaos once more : out of that chaos, at last, the nation, since all the available experiments had been tried and failed, found no way of escape save by restoring the monarchy it had pulled down ; and then, for the final turn in the drama, the whole business, with the restored monarchy faithless to the conditions on which it was invited back, had to be done over again. Thus, through a succession of events each one of which, as it fell away, showed its inevitable successor to have been as it were wrapped up within its shell, Laud made his power felt. He at least caused the work of his immediate antagonists to be practically futile, if he did no more, and so made the whole cycle of events he initiated to constitute but a drawn battle after all. This much may be said for the political side of the matter— although with that side we are only indirectly concerned, and on that side shall need to look only occasionally, and of course only in its relation with the religious side, as our review goes on. But religiously, Laud's course of action had a greater, probably a more important, and certainly a more permanent, effect than it had politically. That effect

we shall presently be able to observe in something of detail.
For the moment, let it suffice to say—as giving a sort of
outline to be subsequently filled in—that by driving the
Puritan clergy to emigration, Laud deprived lay Puritanism
of its needed directing power, with the consequence that
Puritanism, being lay and undirected, and allying itself with
Presbyterianism for ends of political reform, became merged
in Presbyterianism and virtually ceased to exist ; while
Independency, taking up the political cause at the nation's
extremity when Presbyterian dominance had proved a
failure, fell into that falseness to its own principles shown
in the ecclesiastical settlement of Cromwell's time, with
results upon itself which, it is not too much to say, have
never been wholly eradicated since. So that as regards
both Puritanism and Independency, such witness as the
Nonconformist spirit had hitherto had borne to it became
(thanks all through to the process of events which had its
source in Laud) to no small degree impaired.

Much of this, however, takes us beyond the limits of our
decade ; and to the story of the decade we must now return.

Laud's policy towards both Puritanism and Separatism
was such as, after what has been said of his character and
his aims, we should expect. There is in fact the less need
to run the account of it into detail inasmuch as it was only
the continuation to a higher point of the policy which his
predecessors had pursued. The names of Parker, Whitgift,
Bancroft, and Laud, mark the ascending levels of the
thermometer of repression, while those of Grindal and
Abbot mark the levels of its occasional and temporary drop
down. It is not so much in the details of what Laud did,
as in the influence of his action upon the mutually inter-
acting political and religious life of the nation (as indicated
just now) that our interest lies. So far as Puritanism is
concerned, "reform," while of course meaning for Laud
suppression of all variation from one ordered pattern of
ritual and worship, included also—this being its only really
fresh feature—the raising of religious services to a greater
pitch of ornateness, of rich colouring, of symbolism, than
had been the rule before.[1] This latter resulted naturally

[1] See article *A Laudian Church* in the *Guardian*, March 5, 1902.

enough from the stronger sympathy he felt for Rome.   But
in the main he only did—with such variations in detail as
circumstances called for, and with such harsher insistence as
growing opposition made necessary—what previous Arch-
bishops had done.   And Laud's "reforms," having been
already pressed to some extent during his tenure of the
Gloucester Deanery, and on a larger scale when he became
Bishop of London, were naturally pressed on the largest
scale of all after he came to Canterbury in 1633.   It should
be stated that in some quarters there was crying need for a
strong hand, inasmuch as scandals which really deserved the
name were by no means unknown.   If the records are to be
trusted, there was one place at least where cock-fights were
held in the parish church ;[1] and many abuses such as
Baxter tells us existed in the closing years of James's reign
—immoral clergy, clergy not really ordained, clergy who
through age or carelessness never mounted the pulpit steps [2]
—had been perpetuated into the time of Charles.   The
effort to set these things right was wholly praiseworthy.
But it is quite clear that the danger of them grows not less
but greater as religion is made a mere matter of ritual
observance and of strict adherence to form : it is quite clear
also that the Puritan spirit of earnest piety is precisely the
spirit whose dominance in the Church would render im-
possible such acted irreverences and blasphemies as these ;
and to mete out exactly similar treatment to men who
wantonly polluted the holy places or held the duties of their
sacred offices in manifest contempt and to men who cared
and pleaded for "goodness in itself" was, if Laud really
desired to correct abuses, a blunder as well as a wrong.   It
was a blunder into which Laud, so far blinded as he was by
his passion for uniformity as to be unable to distinguish
between the disobedience of a corrupt or irresponsible mind,
and the disobedience of high principle, rushed headlong.
Even before he succeeded Abbot—in 1629 in fact—he had
taken his first steps against those "Lectureships" which, as
we have noted, Abbot himself had fostered,[3] and had caused
Charles to issue some "Injunctions" to Lecturers to don the

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[1] *Calendar of State Papers* (Domestic Series 1637), p. 508.
[2] *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, part i. pp. 1, 2.   [3] *Supra.* p. 253.

surplice and read the service before they preached, and
further, to take up a permanent incumbency if they should
anywhere see an open door.[1]   The incident was typical of
the swift eagerness with which Laud out-ran opportunity if
opportunity moved too slowly, or made opportunity if there
seemed to be none ; for it was assuredly from Abbot, if
from any one, that the initiative in the matter should have
come.   But Abbot, though he grew restive under this
usurpation of his functions, even relicensing some lecturers
whom Laud had silenced, had to submit in the end.[2]   Such
Lectureships as had survived the first assault Laud dealt
with more effectually when presently he reached the supreme
place, the effectual method consisting in breaking up the
" Corporation of Collectors of St. Antholin's " and other
similar bodies, and so stopping at their source the money
supplies whereby the Lecturers had been maintained.[3]   So
were all the evasions which the Lectureship system had
undoubtedly made possible hitherto rendered impossible
henceforth.   It cannot be denied that from Laud's own
point of view the Lectureship system was a dangerous one,
and that its existence could scarcely be a small matter in
his eyes.   It is not so evident that some other things upon
which he stretched out his hand need have troubled him
much.   The foreign congregations in the country might
surely, one would suppose, be left to themselves ; yet Laud
made them pass under the yoke and conform in detail to
the Church of England way, only original immigrants and
the first generation following being exempt,[4] and at the
same time balanced this action by a corresponding endeavour
(perhaps more easily comprehensible) to prevent English
settlers abroad from attending the more thoroughly reformed
places of worship in the country of their residence or from
having for their own clergy in their own Churches there

[1] Heylin, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, p. 212 ; Rushworth, *Historical Collections*,
II. i. 30-32.

[2] One of Laud's admirers speaks, with unconscious humour, of " Abbot's
cruel persecution of Laud "—J. P. Lawson, *Life of Laud*, i. 528.

[3] A brief but clear account of the financial point is in Lingard, *History of
England* (ed. 1855), vii. 180, and in Hook's *Lives of the Archbishops of Canter-
bury*, xi. 180, 181.

[4] *Relation of the Troubles of the Three Foreign Churches in Kent*, by J. B.
(*i.e.* John Bulteel).

ministers who did not observe the Laudian practice pure
and undefiled.[1]   To most people these matters will appear
of minor importance.   But among the things that could
help or hinder the accomplishment of his purpose there was
for Laud nothing great and nothing small.   Nor was it
with any reluctance that he took up his tasks.   He would
rather at any time make than avoid the opportunity of
challenging a foe.   It is characteristic of him that when
in 1633 Charles republished his father's *Book of Sports*,
the order (which, though ostensibly issuing from the King,
was of course Laud's own) declared that the royal pro-
clamation must be read by the clergy in all pulpits on a
given day.[2]   Objectors must thus either be false to their
consciences or come out into the open and deliver a refusal
there.   So always did Laud seem to delight in pushing
matters to extremes.   As Primate, he instituted into the
religious affairs of every diocese throughout the kingdom
an investigation so searching that hardly the minutest
irregularity could find a corner wherein to hide.   Bishops
were to note and report whether any of their clergy failed to
wear the surplice or showed leniency to unauthorised con-
venticles ;   whether the Communion table was properly
placed (an old controversy of Elizabeth's time, this) and
carefully railed in, with the correct kind of carpet beneath
it ;   whether there were anywhere or at any time omissions
from the prescribed service form ;   whether monuments and
windows were intact and well preserved ;   whether at
Baptism the sign of the Cross was always made.   The
report of the Bishops was to be made to the two Arch-
bishops, and these in turn were to report to the King.
Laud was for the most part well served by his colleagues on
the episcopal bench.   From Juxon, Laud's successor at
London—a man, however, of much finer type than Laud
himself—from Juxon onwards, they were content to say
Laud's words and copy Laud's deeds.   The similarity
between the " Visitation Articles " of the various Bishops—
as also the similarity, or rather identity, between their
enquiries and those proposed by Laud himself for his

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[1] Heylin, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, pp. 274-276.
[2] Gardiner, *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*, pp. 99-103.

" metropolitical " visitation of all the dioceses [1]—show that behind the whole thing there was one controlling mind, exercising not simply a general but a particular supervision, and that mind Laud's own.   And the minuteness of some of the points on which reports had to be made—points which would usually be left to the cognizance of the Bishop alone—indicates that the purpose of the investigation was, so to say, to bind round every minister in the kingdom a cord whose other end was held in Laud's own hand.   Laud's eyes, in fact, were everywhere.   Once again, fairness requires us to note that not a few of the prescribed enquiries and demanded " reforms " were really necessary, and made for good.   It was quite right, for example, that the Communion table should be duly railed in—or, at least that adequate safeguards should be provided against a dog coming in at service time and bearing away the sacramental bread, which thing actually happened at Tadlow one Christmas Day.[2] But the whole enquiry—the entire apparatus of "Visitations" —became an Inquisition into much more than abuses.   So far as could be, it became an Inquisition into men's very minds and hearts.   The slightest gesture or absence of gesture must be probed for a hidden significance, and accounted for to the satisfaction of the Canterbury judge. The clergy must be content to become mere machines, mere lay-figures whose dress was cut and coloured to match the standard ecclesiastical pattern-plate, and whose movements went by mechanical routine.   No minister, however un-aggressive he might be, could hope to escape notice.   And it was not only that he was occasionally or periodically— still less once for all—put to the test.   It was rather that he was constantly in the situation of being watched as if through a hole in the wall.   A detective service was really what Laud instituted ; and the slightest irregularity meant arraignment before the Bishop or the High Commission Court straightway.[3]   There was, as has been said, nothing

[1] *Works* (Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology), v. 419 ff.

[2] *Ibid.* v. 367.

[3] Prebendary Smart was kept in prison for no less than eleven years, from 1629 to 1640, though of course Laud was not responsible for the whole time. A popular account of his case may be seen in Dr. Kitchin's *Seven Sages of Durham*, pp. 90-132.

essentially new in all this. It was only the old struggle
(though the climax of it) between insistence on conformity,
regardless of any religious significance it might have for
those from whom it was demanded, and insistence on that
religious significance as the most important thing—between
letter and spirit—between organisation and life. It was
only a fresh (but more thorough) manifestation of what, if
men had possessed eyes to see it and minds willing to
accept the verdict, had been sufficiently manifested before—
the impossibility of both parties to this struggle maintaining
a place within the English Church. There was nothing
really new. But Laud's ruthless pushing of his policy to
extremes—the fact that he practically dragged out into
the light the thoughts and intents of the heart—forced
practically all, even of those who had been unwilling
hitherto, to admit that this was the end. The Laudian
religious tyranny after 1630 justified, and of course intensified
besides, the despair which had settled upon Puritanism since
Charles' reign began.

That Laud did not bear the sword in vain so far as the
Puritan ministers were concerned at once became apparent.
To follow the emigrants of 1630 seemed almost the only
course the Puritan clergy could take. One after the other
the leading men accepted the inevitable, and went out, a
few to Holland, but the majority to the new English colonies
across the Atlantic.[1] The names of Hooker, Cotton, and
Thomas Goodwin, may serve to call to remembrance some
of the stars which at this time dropped out of the English
sky. Nor need it be thought hyperbole or exaggeration
so to term them, for these men and many of their brethren
were among the most scholarly, as well as among the most
truly pious, that the Church of England possessed. So
heedlessly did Laud apply his instruments to the opening
of his own Church's veins, and to the draining out of its
best life-blood. But he may well have been blinded to the
ulterior and worse consequences of his policy by the com-
pleteness of its immediate success. It was much that the
most prominent figures in the Puritan campaign should thus

[1] For some of the principal instances, see Waddington's *Congregational
History*, ii. chapters 9 and 10.

pass to the rear or quite away from the battle-field.   But
this was not all.   In fact, this evidence of triumph, though
indisputable, was not to Laud's taste.   He wanted, not the
flight of his adversaries, but their visible submission at his
feet, followed by a future of obedience which might wipe
out the memory of the past.   So strongly did he object
to emigration, that there were edicts in at least four different
years prohibiting it to all except soldiers and sailors unless
the King's permission or that of six members of the Privy
Council had been obtained.[1]   The edicts were evaded,
nevertheless, and the emigration went on.   But emigration
does not give the full measure of Laud's success.   Such
clerical Puritanism as was left naturally enough became
disintegrated, growing more and more crippled under the
consciousness of failure and of doom, and ceasing accordingly
to be a force with which serious reckoning had to be made.
The signs were many.   Some of the Puritan ministers
stepped over the line and ranged themselves under the
Independent banner ; and Independency (though to see
his clergy allying themselves with it cannot have been well-
pleasing in the Archbishop's eyes) was as yet a thing which
Laud held in contempt rather than a thing he feared.   He
could not know that he was in reality going before its
face to prepare the way for its advent to power.   As
significant as the actual transition to Independency made
by some was the fact that others made little disguise of
being on the way.   John Goodwin (not to be confounded
with the Thomas Goodwin mentioned just now), to take one
instance, was at this time a prominent figure in the London
pulpit ; and he was already moving toward that junction
with Independency which he afterwards made.   One is
keeping well on the safe side in saying of Goodwin with
Mr. Masson,[2] " that he had by this time conceived some
notions tending to Independency in Church government is
mainly an inference from his subsequent actions ; but it
is a fair inference if not inevitable."   He was at any rate
looked upon by every one, Conformist and Puritan alike, as
a man who was going to take his own course, who in all
questions sought for the fundamental principles involved

[1] Masson, *Life of Milton*, i. 680.   [2] *Ibid.* ii. 583.

and pushed them, when found, to their logical end. He was, besides, one of the most energetic of the protestors against the penalties denounced upon the Separatists by Convocation early in 1640, so that by this date he was on the verge.[1] It is true that with Goodwin's Puritanism some strong Presbyterian leanings were mingled—"it is in my spirit or 'mind' only," he says at a later time,[2] "that I 'serve the law' of Independency; but in my 'flesh' I serve the law of Presbytery. And if the cause of Presbytery could be so pleaded and cleared, by any or all her patrons, as to legitimate her birth and pedigree in my judgment and conscience, I profess in the presence of the glorious God who is ready to judge me, that it should be as a year of jubilee, yea, a resurrection from death unto life, unto my flesh." It is true also that Goodwin subsequently broke to some extent with Independency again. But this was partly on doctrinal grounds, Arminianism having finally made of him that complete conquest which from the beginning it had been pushing on; and partly because he objected to the authority of Cromwell's " Triers "—in other words, because Independency did not carry the Independent idea of toleration far enough to satisfy Goodwin himself.[3] Most significant of all, perhaps, is the reluctance with which Puritanism allowed the tendency toward Independency to master it—significant in that it proves how inevitable the reluctantly - accepted fate was seen to be. The three-fold ecclesiastical controversy was all this while going on—the three disputants, Anglican, Puritan, and Separatist, standing so to say in a circle round the question, each one thus finding a foe both on his right hand and on his left, and dealing blows in either direction as opportunity served or could be made.[4] But between Puritan and Separatist that change of tone which had set in at an earlier stage was being greatly accentuated. Sometimes, indeed, the tone became one of entire friendliness, as in the words of

[1] *Life of John Goodwin*, by Thomas Jackson, p. 22.

[2] *Anapologesiastes Antapologias*, end of preface. The quoted passage is the more significant in that the book is a defence of Independency against a Presbyterian attack.

[3] *Life of John Goodwin*, by Thomas Jackson, chaps. ix. and x.

[4] See the Bibliography in Dexter's *The Congregationalism of the Last Three Hundred Years as seen in Its Literature.*

sympathy and pity which in 1635 Wallington uttered for
the Separatists when he saw how sorely they were oppressed.[1]
But short of this, the Puritans maintained their controversy
with the Separatists in a fashion which revealed a suspicion,
often very unwillingly entertained, that Separatism might
turn out to be in the right of it—or at any rate occupying
the winning ground—after all.   Dr. William Ames, one of
whose books is a land-mark in the controversy between the
Puritan and the Conformist Anglican,[2] maintained close
relations with prominent Separatist leaders ; and it is
noteworthy that, although John Canne devotes a good part
of the treatise, " A Necessitie of Separation," [3] to dealing
with some animadversions against Separatism which Ames
had, as more or less of a side issue, put forward in his
" Fresh Suit," some writers have claimed Ames for a virtual
Separatist at heart.   One, indeed, goes so far as to say
that the title of a " Congregational Independent " is the
title he should properly bear.[4]   This cannot be justly
maintained ; but that such a title could with even the
smallest show of reasonableness be applied to Ames proves
the existence in him of a much greater sympathy with the
Independent position than most of the earlier Puritans had
displayed ; while his strictures on Independency prove with
equal conclusiveness that he leant towards it, or sympathised
with it, in despite of himself.   In correspondence which
passed between Puritans in England and Puritans in
America the same spirit is revealed — the spirit which
perceived, and yet more or less poignantly sorrowed to
perceive, that Puritanism must approximate towards Inde-
pendency, and perhaps be merged in Independency in the
end.   It is not surprising that in the new countries, where
natural development had freer play, and where all the
complicated considerations arising out of Puritanism's
anomalous position within the Church of England had no

[1] *Historical Notices of Events occurring chiefly in the reign of Charles the First*,
i. 32, 33.
[2] *A Fresh Suit against Human Ceremonies in God's Worship.*
[3] A lengthy analysis of Canne's work may be found in Hanbury's *Historical
Memorials relating to the Independents*, i. 516-524.   The book has been edited
by the Rev. C. Stovel for the Hanserd Knollys Society.
[4] Fletcher, *The Revival and Progress of Independency in England*, ii.
137, 141.

point, that there Puritanism should slide by slow or fast
degrees into the Independent way. But the very fact that
it did so made the Puritan ministers at home, as tidings
of it reached them, feel uneasily that this *was* the natural
development, and a development which in their own cases
they would be unable to avert. And though they assumed
the *rôle* of mentors, sending in 1637 something like a
reproof to their emigrated brethren, the tone of it is the
tone of men who are upholding what they know to be a
failing cause ; while the very title of their epistle,[1] with its
request for the "judgment" of the New England Brethren
upon "nine positions," practically all of these "positions"
concerned with points of Puritan-Independent controversy,
puts the senders in the position of pleaders rather than in
that of judges upon the bench. "You know how oft it hath
been objected," say the English Puritans, in words which
seem to send a pathetic echo down the years, "that Non-
conformists in practice are Separatists in heart " ; and they
add, with wistful sadness, that the charge is "much counten-
anced by your sudden change, if you be changed as is
reported." Between the lines one reads what the writers
could not bring themselves to set down. In reality, though
they would not have admitted it even to themselves, they
were seeking justification in advance for a step which,
reluctant as they were to take it, might soon be their only
alternative to entire collapse. So, with differing cast of
countenance and with pace that varied here and there,
Puritanism was making, or preparing to make, its exit from
the stage. It was, although some of its representatives were
biting their lips to keep back the final cry, broken and
beaten down. All these things we have noted—the increas-
ing stream of emigrants to America, the tendency in those
who stayed, willing in some and unwilling in others, toward
that Independency with which they would not long ago have
laughed to scorn the idea of being friends—are the last
breaths of a system whose day is done. Over the Puritan
clergy Laud had won a victory which he might well look
upon as complete.

[1] *A Letter of Many Ministers in Old England, requesting the judgment of
their Reverend Brethren in New England, concerning Nine Positions.* The letter
was published in 1643 by Simeon Ashe and William Rathband.

Such witness to the Nonconformist spirit as had been borne by the Puritan wing of the ministers of the English Church was then in quick process of being withdrawn. But the thing did not stop there. The withdrawal of Puritanism from the pulpits necessarily brought about a change in lay Puritanism's tone—so that in this quarter also the Non-conformist witness wavered or died away. For it was only natural under these circumstances that lay Puritanism should become more and more exclusively devoted to the political side of the conflict in which it was engaged. As a distinctly religious and spiritual testimony, Puritanism was becoming weakened to the point of extinction, since those whose special business it had been to maintain it as such a testimony were disappearing from the scene ; for those who were immersed in the civil strife, and who were not able—who through the call which had come to them would perhaps not have been willing—to isolate religious con-siderations from the rest so completely as the holders of ministerial office would do, the prospects and methods of success in that civil strife speedily became the supreme, not to say the only, concern. One page of their original pro-gramme had been dropped by the hands which had hitherto held it up before their eyes—and recollection of its contents grew faint compared with the impression made by the staring letters on the one still left. The Puritan laity, the Puritan patriots, the Puritan members of Parliament who defied and ultimately overbore the autocracy of the King, remained at heart as sincerely concerned for the interests of religion as they had ever been ; but the immediate object was political victory, and if, in taking a course which seemed to promise political victory, they took one which also compromised the interests of the Puritanism they professed, it is little wonder that they failed to see it. That this was what actually happened—that Puritan combatants, in their fight for liberty, actually harmed the Puritanism they loved, and made their political triumph spell Puritanism's defeat—will presently become clear. For the moment, we simply note the fact that the retirement of the Puritan clergy went far, for the Puritan protagonists of freedom, to change what had hitherto been a politico-religious conflict

into a conflict which was almost exclusively political, and
one to be decided by political calculations and chances
alone. If some excuse is deemed necessary for what may
fairly be called the secularisation of lay Puritanism's action,
abundant excuse is at hand. For Laud, being both
originator and instrument, both brain and hand, of the
tyranny on its religious side, was also the chief instrument,
and probably originator too, of the tyranny on its civil side
as well. Men knew that Charles, exalted as his ideas of
his own prerogative were, needed backing in order to correct
the vacillation, the collapse at critical and decisive moments,
to which he was prone ; [1] and they knew that the Arch-
bishop stood always beside him to bind up the breaking
resolution with new encouragements and instigations, so
enabling the King to be faithful to his evil self. They
knew that between Laud and Strafford—the man who from
behind the scenes administered fresh stimulating draughts
to the King when the intoxication of tyrannous ambition
began to wane, the man whose lament it was that tyranny
was so insufficiently and ineffectively tyrannical, the man
who wished that Hampden and his friends, for their refusal
of ship-money, " were well whipped into their right senses " [2]
—a close friendship and correspondence were maintained.[3]
They knew that the jurisdiction of the Star Chamber, the
ostensibly civil Court in which cases outside the competence
of the ordinary law were cited, and the jurisdiction of the
High Commission, the ostensibly ecclesiastical tribunal, were
inextricably confused, that cases which should by strict
order have gone before one were often haled before the
other, and that in any case Laud, with many others, was a
member of both. They knew that when in 1632 the Star

[1] So Browning makes Vane say—

> This King, who treads our England underfoot
> Has just so much. . . . it may be fear or craft,
> As bids him pause at each fresh outrage ; friends,
> He needs some sterner hand to grasp his own,
> Some voice to ask, '' Why shrink ? Am I not by ? "
>
> *Strafford :* ACT I. SCENE I.

It is, however, with reference to Strafford, not Laud, that Browning represents
Vane as speaking.

[2] *The Earl of Strafford's Letters and Dispatches*, by W. Knowler, ii. 138, 158.

[3] *Ibid.* for Strafford's letters to Laud. For Laud's to Strafford, see Laud's
Works (Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology), vi. 300, etc.

Chamber passed upon William Prynne, for his "Histrioma-
trix,"[1] a sentence so vindictive that not even the atrociously
scandalous character of the book could justify it, Laud's
words had contributed not a little towards winding up the
severity of the Court to its excessive pitch.[2]   The religious
and political grievances had for all practical purposes been
merged into one ; and one can scarcely blame the actors
in the drama if they came to concentrate the immediate
diagnosis and the immediate treatment upon the second
rather than upon the first.

    The effect of this was first of all to bring about some
changes in the actual *personnel* of the party of reform ; for
now that reform had become a predominantly political affair,
men who were unprepared for more extreme political
measures parted company, notwithstanding former religious
agreement, from men who were ready to go to any length
in order that political reform might be secured.   Of those
who, though sympathising with Puritanism on its religious
side, were politically too conservative to adopt the sharp
procedures whereto the Puritan champions now had recourse,
Lord Falkland may perhaps be taken as the type.   His
Puritan leanings had never been very pronounced, but they
had been real ; and they survived even while political con-
servatism and aversion from anything like revolutionary steps
were driving him over to the side of the King.   As late as
1640, two years only before the outbreak of the Civil War,
and just at the time when the impeachment of Laud was
being discussed in Parliament, Falkland is found working
with the uncompromising Pym, a man who could set his
face like a flint and make his heart hard as the nether mill-
stone once his aim had grown clear before him, in an effort
to set religious abuses right and in protest against "the
demolishing of Puritanism" which had been carried on so
long.   "He is a great stranger in Israel," Falkland said in

[1] The book was an attack upon the stage, and upon many other amusements,
specially those in which people of rank indulged.   This was construed into a
libel upon the King and Queen.   Prynne denied that he had any such intention,
but having regard to the scurrilous and intemperate spirit by which the writer
was evidently governed, this is hardly conclusive.

[2] "Archbishop Laud procured a sharp sentence to be passed in the Star
Chamber against Prynne "—Whitelock, *Memorials of the English Affairs from the
Beginning of the Reign of Charles the First*, i. 62.

the same speech, "who knows not that this kingdom hath long laboured under many and great oppressions, both in religion and liberty." [1]   Falkland, indeed, makes a pathetic figure as he moves—cultured and gentle and urbane, too cultured and gentle and urbane for the rough-and-tumble of the times, driven away from the scholarly circle which he gathered round him at his house at Great Tew [2] to fight first with tongue and afterwards with sword—as he moves on to the skirmish at Newbury wherein, for his loyalty to a King all unworthy of it, he was to fall.   Conviction drew him to the side of liberty, but instinct, reinforced by dislike of the condition on which alone liberty's conquest seemed likely to be made, pulled him back—and instinct won. More important, however, than any mere personal defections resulting from the secularising of Puritanism's cause—more important in itself and more important certainly for the purposes of our study—is that alliance with Presbyterianism, or rather that assimilation with and to Presbyterianism, which, as a consequence of the secularising, Puritanism made. It was not till the decade was over, and the subsequent swifter running of the tide of events had set in, that this became complete ; but all through the decade the tendency had been gathering to a head.   Even among the clergy a Presbyterian current had begun to flow, though we can only, in the main, deduce the fact from the happenings of a little later time.   The Presbyterian convictions of Edmund Calamy and Stephen Marshall, to name two of the chief men, were doubtless forming swiftly or already formed. But at the moment a minister of Presbyterian views could only maintain his position by setting a watch upon the door of his lips, or indeed by actual dissembling.   Even as it was, Stephen Marshall was suspect.   Laud's Vicar-General reported in 1633 that Marshall was "a dangerous man and exceeding cunning.   No man doubteth but that he hath an inconformable heart, but externally he observeth all." [3]   Probably, however, this does not mean that actual Presbyterianism was a thing he was supposed to favour,

[1] The speech is in Rushworth's *Historical Collections*, II. ii. 1342, 1343.
[2] For Falkland and his life at Great Tew, see Aubrey's *Brief Lives* (ed. 1898), i. 149-153.
[3] *Stephen Marshall, A Forgotten Essex Puritan*, by E. Vaughan, pp. 42, 43.

but only that many of Laud's innovations were guessed to be distasteful in his eyes.   He had earlier been one of those conforming clergy who had interceded on behalf of Thomas Hooker, suspended for Puritanism while Laud occupied the London see ; [1] and by signing a petition for grace to a man like this Marshall would inevitably pass under a cloud. But his actual Presbyterianism we infer from what he said and did afterwards, rather than from anything he had already said or done.   Among the clergy Presbyterianism could hardly as yet, save at great risk, emerge from the back-corners of the mind.   But among the laity Presbyterian opinion, it is clear, was mounting fast.   By the time of the opening of the Long Parliament London had become very largely and even enthusiastically Presbyterian, and almost in all parts and among all classes the Presbyterian idea had burst into flame.[2]   Various circumstances had combined to re-awaken in England this interest in an ecclesiastical theory which had possessed scarcely any representatives, or at any rate scarcely any articulate representatives, in the country since Whitgift's successful stroke of 1593.[3]   Laud had himself dragged one Presbyterian writer into prominence, and attracted the sympathy of many toward a Presbyterian sufferer if not towards the Presbyterian cause, when he summoned Alexander Leighton before the High Commission and the Star Chamber in 1630, and saw him doomed to a sentence comparable for its savagery only to that on Prynne.[4]   Leighton's offence—he was a Scotsman, a divine, and a doctor of medicine—had been the publication of a book called "Sion's Plea against the Prelacy," a book certainly abusive enough, and one which would hardly have advanced the author's ideals had not the cruelty with which his accusers treated him made those accusers seem in-finitely worse than the accused.   The principal thing, however, whereby Presbyterianism was brought to the notice of the English people was Laud's attempt at imposing Episcopacy upon Scotland—a task which, having regard to

[1] *Stephen Marshall, A Forgotten Essex Puritan*, by E. Vaughan, pp. 42, 43.
[2] Masson, *Life of Milton*, ii. 200.   [3] *Supra*, p. 241.
[4] Leighton's own account is given in his *Epitome, or Brief Discovery from the Beginning to the Ending, of the many and great Troubles that Dr. Leighton suffered*, etc.

Scotland's steadfast Presbyterianism since the Reformation, might well have daunted a man accustomed, as Laud was not, to make any calculation of reasonable chances at all. Some sort of endeavour at a transformation of Scottish religion in the episcopal and liturgical sense had been made in the time of James,[1] but James had been wise enough not to push the endeavour to extremes. He had, in fact, restrained the fiery impetuosity with which Laud wished to launch himself against Scotland's quiet strength.[2] But now there was no one to restrain ; and Laud, through Charles his master, brought down stroke after stroke of the whip until it was at length torn from his hand. Almost immediately after he became Archbishop, the prospect of so large a gap as a recalcitrant Scotland would make in his scheme of a country ecclesiastically homogeneous and similarly coloured from north to south and from east to west, goaded him to action. In 1633 Scotch ministers were called upon to wear the surplice, the re-constitution of the High Commission Court taking place soon afterwards, while in 1637, after a variety of other vexatious interferences, the " Book of Canons " and " Laud's Liturgy " were introduced [3]—this last measure rousing the northern nation into passionate refusal, and into the signing of that " Solemn League and Covenant " which bulks so prominently in Scotland's tale. By the scenes which preceded or accompanied the signing—from that of the famous Jenny Geddes making her energetic protest in the shape of a stool flung at the officiating minister's head in St. Giles's, to that of dour and determined men at the Greyfriars Church using their own blood instead of ink for the inscribing of their names [4]—may be measured the height to which Scotch religious passion mounted, and the fatefulness which the crisis was thought to hold. All these things, as the knowledge and report of them spread at a time when English discontent was seething more violently with every passing month, would inevitably kindle or revive Presbyterian

[1] Heylin, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, pp. 78, 79.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 73, 74. Hetherington, *History of The Westminster Assembly* (4th ed.), p. 94.
[3] Hetherington's *History of the Church of Scotland*, i. 275-279.
[4] *Ibid.* i. 298-301.

sympathies, make a link between Scottish and English fortunes, and dispose many towards a Scotch Presbyterian alliance if this held out a prospect of deliverance from their political ills.   Clarendon does indeed declare that "when the whole nation was solicitous to know what passed weekly in Germany and Poland and all other parts of Europe, no man ever inquired what was doing in Scotland, nor had that kingdom a place or mention of one page of any gazette."[1] But however true this may be of the earlier stages of the Scotch quarrel, it does not hold good of that quarrel in the closing years of this decade.   The destinies of the two kingdoms were becoming, in the eyes and for the thought of all men, obviously intertwined.   Hobbes quite erroneously, and quite needlessly, credits the Puritan leaders in England with diabolical art in using the King's difficulties over the Scotch church question as a means of forcing him on from unwise step to unwiser step, so serving their own ends and giving their cause a fictitious appearance of righteousness before the world.[2]   The growing association of interests came in the natural order of things, and did not require to be engineered.   Still, if Laud had recognised defeat in regard to Scotland at the point now reached, history in the north would have been different and history in the south might in consequence have taken another course : it was the attempt at compulsion that brought Scotch Presbyterianism and English Puritanism face to face with hands outstretched for clasping.   The King's fresh commands and threats were met by preparations for war : a Scotch army marched into England as far as Newcastle : Charles, though he set out to meet it, found himself helpless through the disaffection of his people and through want of supplies ; and, after futile endeavours to effect a composition or hew some way out of the imbroglio, we find in 1640 some Scotch Commissioners, with Scotch ministers of religion attending, coming to London in order to survey the situation in partnership with the Parliament which the King had at length been compelled to call.[3]   Meanwhile, simultaneously with the sharpening of

[1] *History of The Rebellion*, i. 145, 146.
[2] In *Behemoth* (*English Works*, ed. Molesworth, vi. 198).
[3] This was of course the Long Parliament.   The Short Parliament had met earlier in the same year, only to be dissolved after three weeks.

the Scotch dispute, matters in the south had been quicken-
ing their pace. The King's extortions and tyrannies were
as fire set underneath water already near the boiling point.
The renewed and more strongly-pressed demands for pay-
ment of illegal taxes—the call for ship-money—the refusal
of Hampden to submit—the decision of subservient judges
that the King was acting within his rights—all these things
had been fermenting in men's minds. On the religious side,
the Canons of 1640 were the last straw.[1]   For the most part,
they were the re-enactment, in codified form, of the provisions
which in one way or another Laud had been seeking to
enforce ever since his ecclesiastical autocracy began.   But
the Convocation by which the Canons were passed had,
contrary to general usage, continued its existence after
Parliament (the Short Parliament) had been dissolved ; and
whether or no in strict law the death of Parliament carried
the death of Convocation with it (the judges, with the Lord
Chancellor at their head, decided otherwise) the point was
one of which in those excited times men would naturally
make the most.   In any case, that Convocation should
legislate after the representatives of the people had dis-
appeared from the scene would lend colour to fear that the
people themselves were in the hands of a power against
whose arbitrariness there was no redress.   But what caused
the greatest tumult was the *et cetera* oath.   By the Canons,
the clergy were required to swear not to attempt any altera-
tion of the existing ecclesiastical system—"archbishops,
bishops, deans, and archdeacons, etc., as it stands now
established."   The "et cetera" was suspected to be a trap.
The official explanation—very probably a true, certainly a
reasonable, one—was that the "etc" had been put into the
rough draft for brevity's sake, that it had been intended
to substitute for it the names of Church officials such as
"Chancellors and the like," and that simply through sheer
forgetfulness this had not been done.   But many were not
content ; and it could not be denied that in taking the *et
cetera* oath men would be swearing to they knew not what.
Many of the clergy refused submission :[2] popular indignation

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[1] Laud's *Works* (Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology), v. 607 ff.
[2] For a decided clerical protest, see Birch, *Court and Times of Charles the
First*, ii. 287.   The Rev. Arthur Jackson writes to A. Bownest, ''My brother

showed itself in tumults and shoutings, in an attack upon
the Archbishop's palace and an invasion of the High
Commission Court when it sat at St. Paul's ; and in the
end the obnoxious Canons had to have their final ratification
postponed.   But they had done their work—and not the
work they had been designed to do.   They had confirmed
the recalcitrancy of those who had been recalcitrant before,
and they had driven into the ranks of the disaffected many,
both of clergy and laity, who had felt no faintest stirring
of the spirit of disobedience up till now.   Against the King's
ministers, known well enough to be the chief and really
responsible transgressors, indignation grew, till this same
year of 1640 saw Laud and Strafford sent to the Tower,
both of them — Strafford almost immediately and Laud
only after years—to go on to the block.[1]   So by sheer
force of circumstances did Presbyterianism and Puritanism,
since both reached their crisis simultaneously, come to make
common cause ; and so was taken the first step towards
that Presbyterian dominance in Church and State whereby
the immediate future was to be so largely shaped.

Passing now from Puritan Nonconformity within the
Church of England to Independent Nonconformity outside,
we find, as we should expect, that upon this too Laud smote
heavily through all these years whenever it lifted its head.
But the smiting had no such disintegrating and destructive
effect upon Independency as it had upon Puritanism.   So
far indeed as mere size is concerned, Independency makes
no very great figure at this time, and certainly gives few
signs of being destined for the important part it was to play
so shortly.   But it is quite clear that not everything is
known.   Some of the Independent congregations have left
no record, the fact of their existence being known to us only
through some casual allusion made by opponents who speak
in scorn.   The general position at the beginning of the
decade will be easily recalled [2]—how the Church in South-
wark, founded by Henry Jacob, was established in something
like strength, how a second Southwark Church had been

will send you the book of new canons, wherein you will find an oath which, if
God be with me, I shall never take.   The Lord be merciful to us ! "
    [1] Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), i. 111, 114.
    [2] *Supra*, Section on *The Rise of the Independents*.

formed in Deadman's Place, how Yarmouth and some other
places possessed Separatist congregations, how several Baptist
Churches had taken root here and there in the country, and
how (a proof that all these things are but fragments from
which we may reconstruct, or at least guess the proportions
of, a larger whole) Bishop Hall of Exeter wrote to Laud
in lachrymose fashion about the "eleven congregations of
sectaries" within London's bounds.[1] The same prelate, by
the way, when he renewed his wail ten years later, found
himself obliged to speak, not of eleven, but of no fewer than
"four score" congregations, "instructed by guides fit for them,
cobblers, tailors, and such-like trash"[2]—a testimony at the
same time to the Bishop's temper and to the growth of
Independency while Laud held the reins. Direct testimony
on this last point, moreover, is to hand in the statement by
Dr. Francis Cheynells that though "in the latter end of
King James his reign, the number of Brownists, properly so
called, was much decreased," yet "when Bishop Laud began
to sit astern (and so he did while even in Archbishop Abbot
his time) then the number of Brownists began to increase ;
the reason was, because ceremonies began to be urged upon
the conscience with so much earnestness as if they had been
necessary to salvation."[3] Which is to say what we have
noted before—that Laud's severities made for Separatism's
gain at Puritanism's cost. Nor could the sternness of Laud's
dealings with the Separatists effect their suppression. There
was no lack of endeavour to that end. June of 1632 saw
the arrest of some members of the Southwark Church, with
John Lothrop, who had succeeded Henry Jacob as pastor
in 1624, at their head.[4] May of the same year (1632)
brought the imprisonment of another Separatist congregation
caught in Newington Woods, as Laud himself reports in
a letter written from Fulham House.[5] A Congregational
Church was formed at Chulmleigh in Devonshire in 1633.[6]
We come upon an admission that Laud had not effected
that extinction of Separatism for which he had hoped in a

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[1] *Supra*, pp. 195, 196.   [2] *Works* (ed. 1863), viii. 277.
[3] *The Rise, Growth, and Danger of Socinianism*, pp. 62, 63.
[4] Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 273.
[5] *Calendar of State Papers* (Domestic Series 1631-1633), p. 353.
[6] *Congregational Year Book.*

communication to Charles (1637) in which the Archbishop remarks, " I must give your Majesty to understand that at and about Ashford, in Kent, the Separatists continue to hold their meetings, notwithstanding the excommunication of so many of them as have been discovered." [1]   The mention of Ashford in this letter is worthy of particular notice, since it suggests a much more consistent continuity in Separatism than the actual records enable us to verify ; for Ashford lies within a short distance of Faversham, where some of the " sectaries " of Edward the Sixth's reign had their home. [2] Next year a meeting in Rotherhite was unearthed. [3]   The Congregational Church now meeting at the City Temple in London made its start in 1640. [4]   So, now at one place and now at another, there rises to the surface that Separatist river which was taking its otherwise untraceable course underground in spite of all the Archbishop's efforts to find out and block up its bed.   We have more definite knowledge of Independency in the west.   In 1634 a Mr. Wroth began in South Wales a work of evangelisation which, in its resulting religious organisation, moulded itself upon the Independent model—Llanvaches in Monmouthshire being the headquarters of the movement, and a Church of com-bined Congregationalists and Baptists being formed there after a few years. [5]   Before the actual forming of this Church, however, the influence had passed to Bristol ; and in Bristol the Independent seed, finding congenial soil (perhaps there lingered still some savour of those earlier Independents who, under Thomas White, had migrated to Amsterdam [6]) brought forth much fruit ; so that by 1640 the Broadmead Baptist Church [7] in the city was fully established, and had become the centre of religious power covering a circle whose radius is reckoned at fifteen miles. [8]   A careful reading off of all the

[1] *Works* (Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology), v. 346, 347. A similar report as to the Ashford district had been made in 1634 (*ibid.* v. 323).

[2] *Supra*, p. 140.

[3] *Calendar of State Papers* (Domestic Series 1638, 1639), p. 187.

[4] *Congregational Year Book.*

[5] Masson, *Life of Milton*, ii. 581.   [6] *Supra*, p. 194.

[7] But see *infra*, p. 302, for a more particular characterisation.

[8] *Records of A Church of Christ meeting in Broadmead, Bristol* (edited by E. B. Underhill for the Hanserd Knollys Society), pp. 17 ff. Masson, *Life of Milton*, ii. 581 ; Fletcher, *The Revival and Progress of Independency in England*, iii. 189-198.

signs shapes itself to the conclusion that Independency was colouring the waters more and more widely through the Laudian decade, that the season was for it a spring of lengthening days and assuredly no autumn of narrowing light and falling leaves, and that it was both important enough to merit the active hostility of men who would rather have slain it with contempt if they could, and strong enough to defy the more positive measures which, since mere contempt would not serve, its foes were compelled to take.

Concerning what may be called the inner life of the Independent communities which thus look out upon us through occasional gaps in the hiding veil, we know but little. There was nothing that corresponds to denominational life and activity in the modern sense. As a general rule, the problem of its own existence was enough for each community to have on its hands. There was but little keeping of official records, except in one or two cases, but little setting down of detailed history. Some things, however, we know. Sometimes, indeed, there are some curiously modern touches in these stories of an older time. When we read of the " call " given by the Southwark Church to Henry Jessey (Lothrop had in 1635 followed Jacob's example and emigrated to America) we almost feel that the page might have been written yesterday. Messengers are sent from the Church to interview the prospective, or at least the possible, minister. Jessey alleges incapacity for the work, and adds —for the idea of emigration was ever present then to the Independent's thought—that he himself may be moved to go where Jacob and Lothrop have gone. The messengers reply that " many of themselves had heard him preach, and been informed of his conversation, and were satisfied of his fitness for them if the Lord were pleased so to order it." He is more debtor, they go on, to England than to America, for England has given him all the good he possesses. So the argument proceeds, till finally Mr. Jessey writes to the Church that he has been brought to see his way to consent.[1] There are other recorded facts which, as we take hold upon them, help to bring the Independency of this period forward

[1] *Life and Death of Mr. Henry Jessey*, by E. W., pp. 7-9.

out of the background shadows into the world of realities, make us understand something of the minuter conditions, so to call them, under which it pursued its way, and form a kind of continuity between its day and our own.   The darkness is not quite impenetrable.   We know that the Church in Deadman's Place, already more than once alluded to, obtained John Canne—author of the famous " Necessity of Separation," reputed compiler of the marginal references so familiar to the Bible reader, and afterwards one of the first Fifth-Monarchy men—as its minister in succession to its founder Mr. Hubbard.[1]   We find witness to a fellowship among the various Separatist congregations, even when widely severed, in the fact that this same John Canne (who held Baptist views, and in whose Church at Deadman's Place both Congregationalists and Baptists had been found) took part in the founding of the Bristol Church alluded to just now,[2] and that Henry Jessey was sent by his Church to assist in a similar way at the founding of the community at Llanvaches.[3]   We can follow Jessey's personal fortunes at least to the extent of knowing that in this decade he was twice arrested (in 1638 and in 1640)[4]—these two arrests giving him not by any means the only taste of imprisonment he was to know, and being indeed prophetic, as one might take them, of the fate which he was to fulfil, since it was soon after his release from a long final imprisonment that he was, after the Restoration, at last to die.[5]   His conversion to Baptist views may also be noted among the Jessey *personalia*, though it must presently be named again.   And of the Church to which Jessey ministered we know more than of some others, since besides what is written as to its important connection with Baptist origins and developments, presently to be observed—we have information that its very growth made it necessary, both for convenience and for

[1] This was after the Church's return from Ireland (*supra*, p. 195).   See also Rev. C. Stovel's Introduction to Canne's *Necessity of Separation* (ed. Hanserd Knollys Society), pp. xvii, xviii.

[2] Canne's history is very obscure.   But it is certain that he had been a good deal abroad between his ministry at Deadman's Place and his appearance at Bristol.   See Wilson, *History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches in London*, iv. 129.

[3] *Life and Death of Mr. Henry Jessey*, by E. W., pp. 9, 10.
[4] *Ibid.*   [5] *Ibid.* pp. 88-94.

safety, to divide it in 1640 into two parts, whereof one remained under Mr. Jessey's own oversight, while the other passed into "Mr. Praise God Barebone's" charge.[1]   Thus occasionally do the mists which for the most part overhang the Independent field roll asunder as we watch, enabling us to discern how those who had place upon it lived and moved and had their being in very far-off years.

Probably the most important item, however, in the Independent history of this period is the inauguration of the Calvinistic Baptist denomination—as distinct from those Arminian or General Baptist Churches of which we have already taken knowledge—by a secession from the older Southwark Church.[2]   Baptist opinions were probably much more widely spread already than the actual number of Baptist Churches would indicate : it may be assumed, as to the Separatists discovered by Laud's officers, that either whole companies, or not a few individuals within the various companies, held Baptist views ; and just as the Deadman's Place Church, under Canne's ministry, was composed of both Independent types, so it may have been elsewhere.   But when we seek for detailed facts, not much material is at hand.   Scarcely any of the General Baptist Churches founded earlier emerge into the light during this space of time.   We may, of course, reasonably suppose them, or some of them, to be pursuing their way with more or less success ; but there is no testimony to their extension, although—if conjectures such as that which declares that a Baptist Church was founded at Olchon in Wales about 1633 be sound[3]—there may have been a good deal of progress whereof the evidence is lost.   It is nevertheless from a point in this decade that Baptist history makes a fresh and a very important start, the chief of the modern Baptist bodies having its birth-date in the decade's closing years.   The story is a little difficult to disentangle, and has been many times told with considerable incorrectness of detail ; but the recent research of a diligent student has cleared the difficulties away.[4]   It

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[1] *Life and Death of Mr. Henry Jessey*, pp. 10, 11.
[2] *i.e.* Jacob's Church, not the one in Deadman's Place.
[3] Thomas, *History of the Baptist Associations in Wales*, p. 3.
[4] Rev. J. H. Shakespeare.   See his condensed but clear summary in *Baptist and Congregational Pioneers*, pp. 179-187.   He shows in "diagrammatic form"

was, as stated, in consequence of a secession from the Jacob Church that a Calvinistic Baptist Church came into being ; and yet it was not in order to vindicate Baptist views, properly so called, that the secession was primarily made. The date of it is 1633, during Lothrop's pastorate ; and its motive, though connected with the question of baptism, was not objection to infant baptism as such. The objection was against the validity of infant baptism which had been performed in the parish church and by the parish clergyman. This it was that moved the seceders to take their separate line.[1]   Then, about 1638, this seceding company developed the belief that baptism should only be administered on public confession of faith, while a little later on the belief established itself that immersion, rather than sprinkling, was the only legitimate baptismal mode—a point of view to which, of course, the General Baptists also came round.   The two articles put together embody, it is unnecessary to say, the Baptist idea.   So by two or three steps of changing opinion was the Calvinistic Baptist platform attained.   It may be stated at once, as closely-related facts, that the main Southwark Church, from which the seceders of 1633 had gone out, itself became Baptist, together with its pastor Jessey, in 1645,[2] and that after pursuing each its own way for a good many years the severed streams from the original fountain found one another again, the resulting united Baptist Church holding its place in London to-day.[3]   The essential point for present notice, however, is that the modern Baptist denomination took its rise in or about 1638.   We have no particulars as to its growth in the immediately following years, other than the mention of a new Church founded in 1639,[4] and the fact that Churches at Newbury, Wantage, and other places, claim to date from about this time.[5]   But

the various secessions and re-unions which followed the original secession of 1633. Crosby's account, which Mr. Shakespeare has corrected in some essential points, is in his *History of the Baptists*, i. 148, 149.

[1] Rev. J. H. Shakespeare, *Baptist and Congregational Pioneers*, p. 182. See also Ivimey, *History of English Baptists*, ii. 345.

[2] *Life and Death of Mr. Henry Jessey*, by E. W., p. 83.   Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, i. 311.

[3] See Mr. Shakespeare's diagram, *Baptist and Congregational Pioneers*, pp. 184, 185.

[4] Crosby, *History of English Baptists*, i. 149.   [5] *Baptist Year Book.*

we shall soon see that the multiplication of its adherents and
Churches was persistent and by no means slow (it is with
the Calvinistic Baptists, by the way, that the Broadmead
Bristol Church is to be ranked) : we shall have to observe
how Baptists stood well to the front among those who
controlled the politico-religious machinery of Cromwell's
time ; and we shall find abundant evidence, dating from the
hour of the movement's inception, that the Baptist movement
—meaning by this not only the movement of Baptist
doctrine, but the movement of Baptist doctrine as embodied
in a separate organisation of its own—had come to stay.[1]

Whether this establishment of a new Nonconformist
denomination on the basis of baptismal doctrine helped or
hindered the clear vision of essential Nonconformist ideals—
whether or not it made for a strengthening witness to the
essential Nonconformist spirit—are questions which, from
the present study's point of view, must of necessity arise.
They have, indeed, suggested themselves in connection with
that founding of the earlier Baptist Churches previously
chronicled.   But it is here, when we see the greater and
more enduring Baptist Church coming into being, that they
clamour most loudly.   The full, or a fuller, answer to them
can only be sought and found in later history.   But some
antecedent likelihoods, or at least possibilities, may here be
set down.   It may be said at once that, *antecedently*, the
setting up of a Church or Churches upon a foundation such as
this seems to be a step away from the position that organisa-
tion must be the automatically wrought out product of life.
For a doctrine of this order, with its accompanying ritual—
like any doctrine and ritual not concerned with really vital
points, that is, not affecting (and it has not been claimed
that the acceptance or rejection of this particular baptismal
doctrine does affect) the validity of the process whereby a
real spiritual life is obtained—ranks with, forms part of,
organisation and its details.   And to make any doctrine

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[1] There are Baptist Churches which, in the *Baptist Year Book*, have much
older dates of origin standing against their names.   Faringdon, for instance, has
1576, and Braintree 1550.   But these dates are not to be taken as marking the
rise of organised Churches in the full sense of the word.   As we have seen,
companies of people holding Baptist views had met in more or less casual fashion
for many years in different parts of the country.

other than that characterised as vital the distinguishing mark of a Church, is to declare—or at least to adopt an initial procedure which may easily lead to some such declaration explicit in word or implicit in general attitude— that, on this one point, the organisation which a true spiritual life will produce is definitely fixed. We have already noted that the early representatives of Independency, while holding the Nonconformist *theory* in its fulness, impaired the completeness of their testimony to the Non-conformist ideal by a more or less authoritative settling of what organisation, when worked out by an inward energising life, would be.[1] To make a doctrine of baptism the signal which a Church hangs out in face of the world, the feature of its dress by which a Church would have men recognise and designate it, certainly seems at a first glance like taking in that same wrong direction yet another stride. And the further danger which one would suppose to be incurred is not inconsiderable. An idea which, however important, is admittedly not the Church's *vital* idea in the strict sense may come—when it is made the Church's *foundation* idea—to be looked upon as the vital idea after all, since the foundation idea and the vital idea *ought* to be one and the same. So may the position easily go somewhat awry. Moreover, a Church which, though itself born out of an adherence to the Nonconformist spirit, makes cardinal a doctrine which is not so born, takes the risk of including among its adherents some whom (though they may cling to the cardinal doctrine nothing short of passionately) the true Nonconformist spirit does not possess, and by whom the true Nonconformist spirit is not even understood ; and thus may difficulties of broken unity and of relations less smoothly edged than they might be—both as among the Church's own members and as between the Church and other Churches of Nonconformist type—take their start. Another fact would tend to increase emphasis upon the baptismal doctrine until it might come to seem to many the vital, as well as the foundation, idea—the fact that the separateness of the new organisation was not really an inevitable thing. It cannot be maintained that, the Baptist position having once been adopted, the founding

[1] *Supra*, p. 202.

of separate Baptist Churches was bound to come.   Another
road was clear.   There was nothing to prevent the con-
tinuance of an Independent denomination in which the
Independents of both types should find room, those of the
Baptist opinion holding their view with undiminished
strenuousness indeed, but holding it simply for an emergence
from the religious life necessary and valid for them as
individuals, and not for an essential part of the Church idea ;
with Independents of the Paedo-Baptist type of course
holding *their* baptismal views (as in point of fact they
always have held them) in a similar way.   The rites
following upon each doctrinal view could of course, as
practice in many modern " Union " Churches demonstrates,
have been administered within one and the same fellowship.
For, though baptismal doctrine and ritual form part of
organisation, they do not even form part of organisation
in the fullest way—in the sense of being an element of it
which must have sway over all or none.   They are really
matters for the individual rather than for the Church as
a whole.   And thus such practical difficulties as would
hinder continued union in other cases of divergence would
not have presented themselves in this.   Obviously, if a
Presbyterian system of Church order and government were
adopted (the reference being now to its possible adoption,
not as in itself authoritative and binding, but as the natural
and best way whereby an inner religious experience may
secure a due reaction of organisation upon itself again) by any
members of an Independent community, outward severance
would have to come.   For the adoption of the Presbyterian
programme would transform the entire machinery of Church
life down almost to the minutest screw ; and just *because*
the dissentients wished to be faithful to the Nonconformist
spirit, would they be compelled to depart.   But the know-
ledge that it was at the inspiration of such a desire for
faithfulness that they had set up their new machinery would
be a safeguard against any undue overvaluing of the new
machinery for its own sake.   As between the two types of
Independents no such practical difficulty in a continued
association, no such practical necessity for severance, can be
affirmed.   Within the borders of one denomination lies

ample space for both to hold and practice their beliefs on the
baptismal question. And the very fact that severance has
taken place on a point which did not actually compel it,
would seem likely—still looking at the matter from the
a priori point of view—to induce an exaltation of the point's
importance, a running up of the estimate toward a holding
of the point for actually vital, in order that the severance
may find the justification it needs. Risks of this kind—
risks of emphasis shifted from the essential Nonconformist
idea, and of a consequent impaired witness to the Non-
conformist spirit on the part of some members of a
Nonconformist Church — were undoubtedly inherent in
that method of separate denominational life which was
adopted by the Baptist protagonists of this time. All this,
of course, is said with full recognition of the sterling In-
dependence of the Baptist founders, and with equally full
recognition of the sterling service rendered to the In-
dependent idea by many in the Baptist succession from the
first Baptist days down to our modern time. For the
moment, we are concerned simply with the dangers which
might have looked threatening to some straining prophetic
eye when the new denominational foundation was laid. We
are merely indicating the risks which—indisputably with no
other motive than that of being loyal to the obligations of
the situation as they conceived them—were run by the
Baptist pioneers. Whether, and how far, the dangers have
materialised, later enquiry will have to show. But the very
fact that one can discern the dangers to have existed is
enough to make one wish that the risks had not been run.
And simultaneously with that wish comes the vision of a
testimony to the Nonconformist spirit and ideal which has
indeed never been borne, but which might have been—
such testimony as would have been given by a united
Independent Church, not more a Church of the present
Congregationalists than of the present Baptists, and not
more a Church of the present Baptists than of the
present Congregationalists, but a Church which, through
union and the greater strength which union imparts,
would have possessed a keener vitality, spoken with a louder
voice, and shown the shining of a greater glory, than either

the Baptist or the Congregational denomination can now boast.[1]

The outstanding facts concerning the concrete and embodied Independency of England during the Laudian decade may be taken as given in what has been set down. The sum of it, perhaps, is that Independency was rather preparing for a great part than actually playing it. It has already been admitted that, in regard of intrinsic size, Independency was at this period no very wonderful affair. Indeed, there is scarcely enough, on a strict reckoning of beginning and development, of seed and flower, to account for the importance which Independency assumed when the decade was done. A sufficient explanation is, however, found in the fact—frequently pointed out[2]—that English Independency, or what might be so called, was largely to be looked for elsewhere than in England itself, and was waiting in Holland or America until the Lord should turn its captivity again. Over and above that, it is of interest to note that certain Independent forces, forces which were to be consecrated to Independency by-and-by, were being girded in more or less of quietude behind the scenes ; or it might be nearer literal accuracy to say that certain pilgrims, having gone out from their points of start not knowing whither they went, were approaching the entrance gates of the Independent land. In Oliver Cromwell, who was to go so far, the deeply religious temper whereby he was from the beginning—at any rate from the beginning of his authentic history— possessed, which had moved him, at his one appearance in the Parliament of 1628, to speak of the prospects of religion on the Puritan side,[3] and which, whatever alloy may have been mingled with it, he never lost, was mounting higher. The first letter of his on which our eyes can fall to-day deals with the problem of finding funds for one of those Lectureships which Laud so sternly suppressed ;[4] and the second one is written with an almost passionate intention of

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[1] This has no bearing on the question, frequently raised in tentative ways, of a possible re-union between the Baptists and Congregationalists of to-day. Considerations weighty against a particular course may lie much less weightily in favour of retracing that course when once it has been taken.

[2] See Masson, *Life of Milton*, ii. 584.

[3] Gardiner, *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 9.

[4] Carlyle, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas), i. 79.

doing " honour to my God by declaring what He hath done
for my soul."[1]   "Truly no poor creature hath more cause
to put himself forth in the cause of his God than I.   I have
had plentiful wages beforehand, and I am sure I shall never
earn the least mite."   It is the true Puritan note.   Towards
the end of the decade there was waking in him, as he saw
the Presbyterian hand stretched across the northern border
and heard the Presbyterian call grow loud, that interest in
Presbyterianism and in its possibilities of influence upon the
situation (a real Presbyterian conviction it cannot be called)
upon which he was to tarry for a little space.   Milton's grave
Puritan temper, so grave and yet allied with so charmful and
cultured a light-heartedness, had uttered itself in his earlier
poems while the decade was young, but had realised—as
some who in love of learning and beauty were Milton's natural
kin did not realise—that something else than learning and
beauty must sit at the helm if the ship of religion were to be
steered safely into the harbour through storms.[2]   And at
the end of the ten years we are surveying, Milton, returning
from his foreign tour, and losing his way, as did many more,
among the bewildering shadows which circumstances cast,
found himself drawn into a Presbyterian position from which
he was soon obliged to recede, and into a Presbyterian
advocacy which he was soon obliged to retract.[3]   Cromwell
and Milton were not yet Independents, but their pilgrimage
had begun ; and more important, perhaps, for the history
of Independency than anything that actually happened
from 1630 to 1640, are these preliminary movements, as if
in semi-sleep, of two great Independent minds that were
to be.   If our minds will turn to one whose work was of a
quite different order from that of Cromwell and Milton, but
from whom leapt out a spiritual stimulus which will endure
to the world's end—one of whom a prophet might well have
said at this time that the "little one shall become a

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[1] Carlyle, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas), i. 89, 90.

[2] Dr. Gardiner remarks, as to George Herbert and Milton, " To the historian
these earlier poems of Milton have the deepest interest.   They tell of a time
when the great intellectual disruption of the age was still capable of being
averted.   Between Herbert and Milton there is a difference in the point of view
which may lead to absolute opposition, but which has not led to it yet."—*History
of England from 1603 to 1642*, vii. 272.

[3] Masson, *Life of Milton*, ii. 237, etc.

thousand "—we remember, also, that in Bedfordshire a boy was already experiencing those convictions of sin which John Bunyan, born in 1628, tells us came upon him even when he was but nine or ten years of age.[1] Setting all these things together, the greatness of Independency's promise can be to some extent reckoned up. Though few or none could know how in Independency a really royal influence had appeared, we can unhesitatingly affirm, as we look backward, that its star was rising in the east.

It may be well (since we have looked, in the case of Independency, beyond full-grown to merely adolescent powers) to add a word or two as to some other forces, not Independent, which were at their work or preparing for their work while the Laudian decade went on, and the results of whose working were by-and-by to be revealed. William Chillingworth certainly merits a few moments' steadfast glance, for his book, *The Religion of Protestants a safe Way to Salvation*, which appeared in 1637, is the first instance of an attempt made from within the Church to found religious belief upon strictly rational grounds.[2] Having become a Roman Catholic in his younger days, and having under Laud's influence returned from his brief sojourn in the Roman tents, Chillingworth was perhaps specially fitted to appreciate the difference between a faith accepted at the bidding of authority and a faith which really commended itself to an examination made by the mind. He continued a loyal clergyman of the Established Church ; and how far, in practice, his doctrine of toleration would have led him, remains somewhat obscure. His grasp upon his idea was by no means so close and firm as that of Leonard Busher had been. His mind, in fact, was rather of the latitudinarian than of the tolerant type properly so called. That is, he considered beliefs, outside certain things which he held to be plainly " revealed," to be relatively unimportant in themselves ; and—with a remarkable anticipation of some modern positions—he could look on the signing of the Church's Articles

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[1] *Grace Abounding*, etc., § 7.
[2] The best account of Chillingworth's ideas is in Des Maizeaux, *Life of Chillingworth*. But there is also a good one in Tulloch, *Rational Theology and Christian Philosophy in England in The Seventeenth Century*, i. 261-343.

as signifying less a declaration of intellectual assent to them
than a promise not to subject them to open attack.[1]   It will
be seen that in order to estimate the bearing of all this upon
toleration, one would need to know first of all what was
meant by doctrines " plainly revealed," [2] and next, whether
men who could not bring themselves to Chillingworth's free-
and-easy method of affixing signatures to statements of creed
were to be allowed to go their own way.   But in any case,
Chillingworth was clear enough that it was by the exercise
of reason a creed was to be attained, and that inability to
accept dogmas did not involve moral blame.   This was what
might be called a telescopic idea, which those who picked it
up later on might draw out to length on length.   It is not
surprising that some of Chillingworth's contemporaries should
see this, and should charge him with actually holding some
of the heresies to which his doctrine might conceivably lead.
The accusation of Socinianism, being (as is Unitarianism in
similar modern cases) the handiest, was flung against Chilling-
worth, first by a Jesuit,[3] on whose lips the charge was probably
revenge for Chillingworth's desertion of Rome, and afterwards
by the Dr. Francis Cheynells whom we met a little while
ago.   As against Chillingworth himself, the charge had no
foundation, though John Biddle, subsequently the founder of
the first actual Unitarian Church in the country,[4] is known to
have been influenced by Chillingworth's work.   Cheynells,
however, pursued the controversy to the bitter end—and
beyond it.   He nursed Chillingworth through his last illness
with utmost care, and then, as he himself tells us with curious
self-satisfaction, flung into the dead man's grave a copy of
the famous book, crying " Get thee gone, thou cursed book,
which hast seduced so many precious souls ; get thee gone,
thou corrupt rotten book ; get thee gone into the place of
rottenness, that thou mayst rot with thy author and see

[1] Des Maizeaux, *Life of Chillingworth* (ed. Nichols), p. 166.   Chillingworth,
Religion of Protestants, *etc.* (ed. Bohn), p. 20.

[2] " ' Nothing is necessary to be believed but what is plainly revealed ' was a
clear statement ; but like all similar statements there were difficulties in the inter-
pretation of it."—W. H. Hutton, *The English Church from the Accession of
Charles the First to the Death of Anne*, p. 48.

[3] Tulloch, *Rational Theology and Christian Philosophy*, *etc.*, i. 290, 291.

[4] *Infra*, pp. 353, 381.

corruption !" [1]   Cheynells, being himself a Presbyterian of
the most rigid type, was naturally enough unready to con-
cede the liberty of speculative thought which Chillingworth
claimed, and, since he held liberty of thought to be really a
mischievous thing, made no mistake from his point of view
in counting Chillingworth's book a menace to the world.
For undoubtedly Chillingworth did much, by the direct and
indirect influences he shed abroad, to bring about that tolera-
tion which in his own time neither Conformist nor Noncon-
formist fully advocated, the gradual growth of which has been
one of the conditions enabling Nonconformity of all types,
from the most moderate to the most extreme, to live its life
and do its work, and of which all men from Chillingworth's
day to this, though with occasional pauses in the process
and with occasional recrudescences of hesitation, have been
becoming less and less afraid.   In a study of the Noncon-
formist spirit and its fortunes, he deserves, assuredly, a few
moments' steadfast glance.

And mention at least must be made of Richard Baxter
—a " spiritual splendour " whose day of perfect shining had
not yet come, who through the decade was pursuing his
ministry at Kidderminster, not yet, wonderful to say, having
heard either of Independency or of that Presbyterianism for
which he was to suffer so much [2]—and of George Fox, who,
not yet arrived at his spiritual crisis, but nearing it, was
serving his master at the shoe-maker's bench or tending
sheep in the meadows of Leicestershire.[3]   There were, in-
deed, many ships, well laden, coming across the waters from
the unknown.

In summary, then, this is the Laudian decade.   And the
outstanding facts which confront us at its close are the
practical extinction of the Puritan clergy, the practical
sinking, under force of circumstances, of the religious in the
political cause, and the drawing together, likewise under
force of circumstances, of the English and Scotch discontents
—which latter meant, or was coming to mean, the accept-

[1] *Chillingworthi Novissima ; or the sickness, heresy, death, and burial of
William Chillingworth*, p. 4 from end.   Chillingworth died in 1653.

[2] *The True History of Councils*, p. 90.

[3] Fox's *Journal* (ed. 1901), i. 2.

ance of the Presbyterian alliance and of the conditions under which alone that alliance could be formed. These were the things which any man of the time could know. There were undiscerned things—which might perhaps have been discerned, however, if men had been less swift to seek escape from the ills they bore by flying to others that they knew not of—in the future. These things—then undiscerned particularly in their bearing upon the Nonconformist spirit and its manifestation—it will be the business of our next following studies to learn.

CHAPTER III

THE CIVIL WAR AND THE COMMONWEALTH

SECTION 1

The Presbyterian Ascendancy

1640–1653

AUTHORITIES.—Most of the books mentioned for Chapter II. are still useful, particularly Masson's *Life of Milton*, and the various denominational histories. Fuller, however, ceases at the death of Charles. The following should be added. Gardiner's work is continued after 1642 under the title *The History of the Civil War*, and after 1649 as *The History of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate*. Rushworth's *Historical Collections*, frequently referred to in the text, contains the most important documents, Ordinances of Parliament, etc., down to the death of the King, and some of these have been printed in Gardiner's *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*. Some, though by no means all, of the material given in Rushworth is also to be found in Nalson's *Impartial Collections*. Scobell's *Collection of Acts and Ordinances* is also very useful, and Husband's *Collection* in a minor degree. Whitelock's *Memorials of English Affairs* is invaluable, as are Baillie's *Letters and Journals*, the latter, of course, particularly for ecclesiastical affairs. Baillie records many small, but significant, incidents which other writers were unaware of or ignored. For the Assembly of Divines, Hetherington's *History of the Westminster Assembly* is useful, though his strong Presbyterian bias makes care necessary in its use, while Lightfoot's *Journal* (in Volume 13 of his Works) gives the daily Diary of a member up to December 1644. The religious situation under the Presbyterian settlement is dealt with in Drysdale's *History of the English Presbyterians*, but far better in Shaw's *History of the English Church during the Civil Wars and under the Commonwealth*. Stoughton's *History of Religion* in England deserves special mention as a thorough, learned, and impartial account of religious affairs onward from the meeting of the Long Parliament. Hanbury's *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents* is still, as for the previous section, an invaluable treasury of information regarding the literary side of the Presbyterian-Independent controversy.

THE fortunes of the Nonconformist spirit throughout the period of the Civil War and the Commonwealth may best be followed by dividing the said period into two main parts, in the first of which we see Presbyterianism, and in the second of which we see Independency, as the dominant religious

and to a great extent the dominant political force.   And an attempt at making a general characterisation of the whole period would, as suggested in a previous summary,[1] lead us to say this—that the dominance of Presbyterianism, accepted by the political leaders chiefly for the sake of political success, while involving the defeat of the true Nonconformist spirit, did not lead to political success after all, that thereupon Independency, protesting on behalf of the Nonconformist spirit and ideal, took both the political and religious problems into its hands, stepping in to remedy the confusion which the Presbyterian ascendancy had caused, and finally, that in the very act of doing this Independency further impaired itself as an embodiment and representation of that Nonconformist spirit which already it only embodied and represented in part.   In fine, therefore, it is of the beating down of the Nonconformist spirit in the years of Presbyterian power, and of its recovery, wounded and scarred and in its bewilderment somewhat uncertain of itself, in the years when Independency came to the top, that we have to tell.   Yet that is not quite all.   For while Presbyterianism ruled, exalting organisation above life as every Conformist system does, another and fuller protest on behalf of the Non-conformist ideal, besides that merely partial one which Independency made, was rising upon another quarter of the stage, to be maintained through both the Presbyterian and the Independent ascendancies, and to be maintained, for that matter, till to-day.   As if in obedience to the law whose existence we have before this found reason to credit—the law that just when the Conformist spirit, exalting organisation over life, asserts itself most powerfully, the Nonconformist spirit, setting life in the first place and organisation in the second, breaks in from beyond the circle of things to declare its claim—the rise of the Quakers synchronises with the sharpest pressure of the Presbyterian hand.   At this new expression of the Nonconformist ideal, then, we shall have to look, and adding this as another division of the period's events to those already named, we have the Presbyterian ascendancy, the rise of the Quakers, and the Independent ascendancy, as the three topics of our immediate concern.

[1] *Supra*, p. 277.

It is with the Presbyterian ascendancy that we begin.
From 1640 to 1653 it may roughly be said to run. Some
qualification of the statement, however, has to be made.
The true time of actual Presbyterian dominance is from
1643 to 1648—from the actual alliance which the English
leaders made with the Scotch Presbyterians in the year
named first to the expulsion of the loyalist members of
Parliament by Colonel Pride in the year named second.
From 1640 to 1643 was, strictly speaking, a time during
which the Presbyterian ascendancy was being prepared for
by the march of events—or, it might be more accurate to
say, a time during which the whirling currents gathered
themselves to a focus where Presbyterian ascendancy was
thrown up to the surface at last, and clutched at, as being
the thing they wanted, by those who watched and waited on
the banks.   From 1648 to 1653 was a time which can
hardly be called anything else than a time of chaos, a time
during which, if Presbyterianism was no longer a really
dominant force, no other force was really dominant either—
a time of disorder which was only shaped and stilled again
when Oliver Cromwell became the country's autocrat with
the ejection of the Rump.   It is between these two spaces
of time—that is, from 1643 to 1648—that we find the
years when Presbyterian power was really at its height.
But so long as it is remembered that there was a prepara-
tion, an establishment, and a dissolution—an ascent, a table-
land, and a decline—(and this fact will become clearer as
the tale is told) we may keep to the rough statement that
the years of Presbyterian ascendancy run from 1640 to
1653.

During the first three years, then, the door was being
pushed open for the Presbyterian power to come in.   The
elements of the situation were indeed mingled from the first ;
and while it is correct to say that the way was being prepared
for Presbyterianism's temporary supremacy, it is equally
correct to say that there were always factors in the case which
must inevitably prevent Presbyterianism's supremacy from
being more than temporary after all.   As we shall presently
note, Independency too was upon the road, and determined,
or at any rate destined, to arrive.   But Independency, though

moving on, was still considerably in the rear; and the events which were bearing Presbyterianism to the goal had too long a start to be checked for the present in their march. The phrase is true to actual fact; for it was, as has been hinted before and as must here be noted again, by force of events that the political leaders of the Long Parliament were driven into a Presbyterian attitude which they were at first by no means anxious to assume. For that matter, "reform" rather than "revolution" was still, in affairs both of Church and of State, their watchword; although it must be remembered that, while constitutional knowledge and constitutional experience might lay down the lines of what reform in State affairs really meant, reform in affairs of the Church was in all probability a much vaguer thing for the minds of those who had to carry it through. Whether Pym and his colleagues had anything like a constructive ecclesiastical policy may be doubted: so far as the indications go, they were indeed conscious of religious abuses that cried aloud to be swept away, without being conscious of any positive religious ideals that cried aloud to be invested with concrete form; and limitation of episcopal power, together with certain other cognate and consequent changes, seems to have been the main thing they desired to effect. Or, if they realised some really constructive points as being involved in this limitation, it is certain that the setting up of an entirely fresh ecclesiastical system was not in their programme. The successive religious enactments and resolutions of the Parliament, up to its actual conversion to Presbyterianism (they were like the repeated probings of an instrument which, through the operator's fear of going too deep, is not thrust deeply enough) set this beyond doubt. Also, let it be remembered, the religious problem had become for these men "secularised" in the sense previously described—that is, they viewed it as a part, and as necessarily a somewhat subordinate part, of the political case. This is not (to repeat a guarding qualification made in the same connection before) to say that they were indifferent to the interests of religion, or held them to be intrinsically unimportant, but that it was not with a single eye to religious consequences, which was indeed impossible, that they looked upon religious concerns.

It is perhaps significant that while proceedings against Strafford and Laud were instituted at practically the same time—at the close of 1640—Strafford was sent to the block so early as the following May, while in the Archbishop's case the final and fatal issue was not reached till January of 1645, the execution being then carried out largely to satisfy the hatred toward Laud felt, naturally enough, by the Scotch. A moderate reform whereby the power of the episcopal bench should be checked without being utterly destroyed, and whereby episcopal usurpations of secular authority should be rendered impossible,[1] would, at least in the initial stages of the struggle, have contented the majority of those who worked with Pym. It was for such a reform as this that they set themselves to strive. Immediately after the meetings of the Parliament, a " Committee for Religion " was appointed [2] which—having formed sub-committees for various specific purposes, such as consideration of the characters of the clergy and of complaints against them—proceeded to take into account the state of religion as a whole. Various resolutions of the House followed—one in December of 1640 declaring that Convocation had no power, without the consent of Parliament, to make laws binding upon clergy or laity [3] (this being, of course, specially directed against the Convocation and the " *et cetera* oath " of earlier in the year)—while another, of March 1641, expressed the Commons' conviction that the presence of the Bishops in the House of Lords was prejudicial to the good of the land.[4] It was not until a Bill which sought to give legislative effect to this last resolution had been rejected by the Lords that the Commons went further, and resolved that some of the orders of the clergy, such as Archdeacons, Canons, Deans and Chapters, and others, ought to be removed from their place in the Church.[5] Even now no proposal for the destruction of the Episcopate had been passed through the Lower House, although we must presently take note of one which, when the rejection of

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[1] The abolition of the Star Chamber and the High Commission Court was one of the Long Parliament's earliest acts. Gardiner, *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*, pp. 176-189.

[2] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. i. 19.

[3] *Ibid.* II. ii. 1365.   [4] *Ibid.* III. i. 206.   [5] *Ibid.* III. i. 285.

the Bill above-named appeared certain to come, succeeded in getting through more than one stage. Up to this point, moderate reform was still what might be termed the "official" line. And in going thus far, the Commons certainly had the support of large sections of the public ; for petitions had flooded over the newly-met Parliament, and from all parts of the country had come complaints of clerical tyranny and requests for redress,[1] to be followed, as the Commons took their successive steps, by many an expression of grateful thanks.[2] But beyond this clipping of the episcopal wings[3] there was no inclination on the part of the reformers to go. And that in this conservatism of the leaders, as well as in their reform, large sections of the public acquiesced, is evident from the fact that in this same year of 1641—as voices in this quarter or in that mooted the total abolition of Episcopacy, numerous petitions were sent up to the Parliament (Hallam speaks of having seen examples, numerously signed, from eighteen counties in England and Wales) praying that abuses might be set right but that no drastic constitutional changes should be made.[4] Both outside the House and inside it was "moderate reform" that was at first most generally desired.

But there were many forces at work to which a moderate reform of this kind allowed far too insufficient an opportunity ; and no halt proved possible at so early a point of the road. The meeting of the Long Parliament was looked upon by the people at large as marking the beginning of a new era : great events, it was felt, were at hand ; and the stoppage of the stream of Puritan emigrants was but one sign out of many that in many hearts there were new-born hopes of a redemption drawing nigh.[5] Necessarily, any influences making for change would find their chance—and find it all the more readily, perhaps, in proportion as the projected change was complete and thorough—among the kindled and

[1] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. i. 135, etc.

[2] Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 385, 386.

[3] This phrase was actually used by Lord Digby in the Debate upon the root-and-branch petition. See Rushworth as former note, III. i. 170.

[4] *Constitutional History* (ed. 1854), ii. 116 note.

[5] Masson, *Life of Milton*, ii. 585. Events at home, says Winthrop, "caused all men to stay in England in expectation of a new world" (*History of New England 1630-1649*, ed. 1853, ii. 37).

sanguine crowds.   The rising of any sun that promised light
and warmth would be welcomed by those whose eyes were
straining earnestly towards the east.   The first interrogative
word—" Art thou he that should come, or do we look for
another ? "—would pass without difficulty and without much
delay into a note of acquiescence ; while acquiescence would
in turn be transformed into enthusiasm ere long.   And of
the influences which were ready to take advantage of the
people's mood Presbyterianism was easily strongest and first,
with the greatest facilities for thrusting still further open the
gate which men's eager receptiveness had already set ajar.
The Scotch Commissioners were all this time in London ;
and though the settlement of the Scotch ecclesiastical dispute
was their primary concern, their very presence, involving as
it did a retinue of Presbyterian clergymen and the diffusing
through all their circle of influence and acquaintance of a
Presbyterian atmosphere, did much to strengthen the hold
which Presbyterianism had been taking upon the City
through the previous years.   Clarendon is doubtless right in
looking upon the transference of the Scotch negotiations to
London as one of the greatest blunders made by the King
and his party ;[1] for it certainly went far to familiarise the
minds of all men with the Presbyterian propaganda, and so
to prepare the way for the subsequent acceptance of the
Presbyterian terms insisted upon by Scotland as the price of
her support.   Of the four clerical Commissioners—Baillie,
Henderson, Gillespie and Blair—Henderson was the greatest
preacher ; and every Sunday his eloquence filled the Church
of St. Antholin's, which was allotted to the Scotch for the
conduct of worship after their own way, with an eagerly-
listening crowd.[2]   Moreover, the Commissioners—particularly
Baillie, who, if not the first preacher, was at any rate the
first politician of the party—used their opportunity with the
serpent's wisdom, held conferences, issued pamphlets upon
ecclesiastical questions,[3] urged the uselessness of a half-reform,
and generally did what they could to spur on what seemed
to them a Parliament merely lagging and lukewarm.
Baillie's own letters enable us to see how closely he

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[1] *History of the Rebellion*, i. 215.   [2] *Ibid.* i. 251.
[3] See Dale, *History of English Congregationalism*, p. 241.

watched events, how over and over again he put his hand upon the levers and the wheels.[1] God was going to do great things for England, he is constantly repeating in many varieties of phrase. God is making all things go well. Baillie was more than willing to assist in working the transformation scene, and his efforts were far from vain. When Bishop Hall, in reply to the writings of the Scotch Commissioners, published a defence of Episcopacy,[2] five English ministers— Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow—banded together to write and issue in 1641 a definite defence of the Presbyterian platform,[3] under the pseudonym of "Smectymnuus," which uncouth word was formed from the initial letters of the writers' names. It was the first English book (for Leighton's [4] can scarcely be so called) of the kind since Cartwright's days ; and its appearance signified a great deal. It bore testimony to the working of the Presbyterian leaven among the clergy ; adding greater weight to the "ministers' petition" which, bearing the names of seven hundred ministers, and praying, if not for the actual establishment of the Presbyterian system, for something which went far in that direction, was presented to the House in January of the same year.[5] And that the influence of the Commissioners had heightened an already existing Presbyterian predisposition up to a veritable Presbyterian zeal in many ordinary men became evident even earlier—as early as December 1640, when the great "Root-and-Branch Petition," beseeching Parliament that Archbishops, Bishops, and all the other dependencies of the ecclesiastical Government, "root-and-branch," might be done away, was presented with no less than fifteen thousand signatures at its foot.[6] If Baillie and his colleagues were not, as Hallam would make them,[7] the

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[1] *Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie* (ed. Bannatyne Club).

[2] *An Humble Remonstrance to the High Court of Parliament by a dutifull Sonne of the Church* (*Works*, ed. 1863, ix. 282 ff.).

[3] *An Answer to a Book entituled " An Humble Remonstrance,"* etc.

[4] *Supra*, p. 291.

[5] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. i. 152, 153.

[6] Gardiner, *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*, pp. 137-144.   Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. i. 93-96.   Whitelock, *Memorials of the English Affairs*, etc. (ed. 1853), i. 114.   For a similar petition from Kent, see Rushworth, as before, III. i. 135, 136.

[7] *Constitutional History* (ed. 1854), ii. 116.

actual instigators of the petition, they had certainly supplied much of the raw material from which it had been worked up.

There were already in the Commons some on whose sympathy the Presbyterian extremists could count. Men like Fiennes and Vane were hot for something much greater than mere " moderate reform." [1]   And little by little, as events developed, this party grew, partly because the moderate reformers naturally put their demands higher as their first demands were refused, and partly because the swift rush of events, as the quarrel with the King became more accentuated, brought a possible Scotch alliance more clearly into view.   In fact, the two cords which were drawing the strictly moderate party away from its first standing ground, although still distinguishable by difference of colour, were nevertheless closely intertwined.   When it was seen that the Bill for excluding Bishops from the Lords was fated to be lost in the Upper House (for the Lords were more moderate than the most moderate of the Commons, and did not really rise to the necessities of the situation until the outbreak of the Civil War) another Bill, founded upon the " Root-and-Branch Petition," was introduced into the Lower ; [2] and although it did not reach its third reading, the fact that it got safely through its second on the day of its bringing in shows that temper was passing out of control and accumulating an explosive force which might presently make violent outbreak in unexpected ways.   We are justified in holding that outraged feeling, rather than actual conviction, actuated some who voted for the Bill, inasmuch as Sir Edward Dering, its introducer, himself declared subsequently that he had acted without sufficient consideration (" the Bill did hardly stay in my hand so long as to make a hasty perusal "), and affirmed that Bishops filled a useful, if not an indispensable, function in the Church.[3]   But if the action of those

[1] Vane became an Independent later on.   But it cannot be said, as Green says (*History of the English People*, iii. 199) that he and his root-and-branch colleagues were at this time almost as hostile to Presbyterianism as to Episcopacy. It was not till the Presbyterian arrangement had failed that these men took the next step.   They went, in this respect, the same road that Cromwell and Milton travelled.

[2] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. i. 278, 279.

[3] See *A Collection of Speeches made by Sir Edward Dering*, pp. 62-67.

supporting the Bill did not in all cases arise from conviction, it was with many of them only a little in advance of a conviction which was fast upon its way. And the really convinced extremists were strong enough, though they lost their Bill, to move, straightway upon its failure, for the impeachment of some of the Bishops in the Lords.[1] Meanwhile, and immediately afterwards, affairs on the strictly political side gathered quickly to a head. The settlement of the dispute with Scotland in August of 1641 put the English political leaders at a disadvantage by freeing the King's hands : then came the dark fears that by intrigues in Ireland and Scotland Charles was attempting to buttress or rebuild his crumbling ascendancy, and that even murder and massacre might be reckoned among the weapons he would not shrink from taking into his hands.[2] Facing the heightened peril with heightened resolve, the Commons prepared the " Grand Remonstrance," enumerating therein one by one the iniquities which had been perpetrated against State and Church ; and, though men half-hearted and half-convinced, like Falkland, might drop away (defection, indeed, went so far that the final vote on the Remonstrance was carried by a majority of no more than eleven[3]), put it, by means of a deputation, into the King's own hands.[4] Almost concurrently with the Grand Remonstrance, another step had been taken on the side of religious reform, the Bill for depriving the Bishops of their seats in the House of Lords having been again got through.[5] On this occasion the Lords themselves made no demur. They were, in fact, as eager as the Commons ; for the Bishops themselves had turned the Peers from friends to foes. Declaring, what was perfectly true, that they could not attend the House for fear of the mob, they had gone on to claim that all proceedings during their absence were null and void. The Lords showed their resentment at this insult not only by passing the Exclusion Bill, but by indignantly demanding support from the

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[1] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. i. 359.

[2] Calamy, *Nonconformists' Memorial* (ed. Palmer), p. 3.

[3] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. i. 428. A brief account of the final debate is in Gardiner's *History of England from 1603 to 1642*, x. 74-76.

[4] Rushworth, as before, III. i. 436-453, giving the entire Remonstrance and the King's reply to those presenting it.

[5] *Ibid.* III. i. 553b.

Commons under this attack upon Parliament's dignity and
power—to which demand the Commons replied by impeaching
the Bishops and committing them either to the Tower or to
the custody of Black Rod.[1]   Everywhere it was felt that the
supreme crisis was come.   Charles, angered by the presenta-
tion of the Remonstrance, and probably angered still more,
if Clarendon be right,[2] by a report that some of the reformers
contemplated an impeachment of the Queen, went to the
House of Commons to enact the famous scene in which he
attempted the seizure, on the count of high treason, of the
"five members"—Strode, Hampden, Holles, Haselrig and
Pym.[3]   This was in effect the beginning of war, though it
was not till August (1642) that the royal standard was
raised at Nottingham.   Then came the early Parliamentary
misfortunes—the defeats and the loss of Bristol in the west,
with the growing dread of a royalist advance upon London
itself—then the determination that the army of the Scots
must be called upon to make good the lack of strength
which the Parliamentary army had shown—then the
despatch of envoys to the north—then the bargaining
and negotiating, long drawn out, in which Scotch
insistence on the full acceptance of the Presbyterian
system throughout England, if there were to be any succour,
grew more and more peremptory as against the English
Commissioners' desire for a merely civil League[4]—then the
inevitable surrender—and finally the formal sealing of the
bond, when on September 25th 1643, the English House
of Commons "took the covenant" in St. Margaret's Church,
"worshipping the great name of God" with uplifted hands.[5]
It was a great scene, and for the Presbyterians a victory
indeed.   For the hour, at any rate, the nation as a whole,
and very many of the nation's greatest men, were subjected
to the Presbyterian spell.   Cromwell, though not enthusi-
astic about the Covenant (he did not sign till after some

[1] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. i. 467-469.

[2] *History of the Rebellion*, i. 555, 556.

[3] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. i. 477, 478.   Gardiner, *History of England from 1603 to 1642*, x. 137-142.

[4] *Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie* (ed. Bannatyne Club), ii. 90.

[5] Hetherington, *History of the Westminster Assembly* (4th ed.), pp. 120, 121.
The League and Covenant may be seen in Gardiner's *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*, pp. 267-271.

delay),[1] and not present in St. Margaret's with the rest, was hopeful that the solution of all the difficulties had been found ; and Milton, though the beginning of disillusionment was not far off, was still on the crest of that wave of Presbyterian enthusiasm which had compelled his temporary renunciation of poetry and inspired his ecclesiastical writings of the previous two years.[2] An observer might well have supposed that the ship had at length come safely to port. For the merely negative policy which in religion, as distinct from civil affairs, was all that the leaders had possessed at first, had here and now become a positive policy indeed, and a positive policy welcomed for the most part with acclaim. The die was cast, and Presbyterian ascendancy secured.

In a manner Nonconformity, since Presbyterianism was Nonconformity from the standpoint of the Church of England, had scored a success. But for the true Nonconformist spirit the thing marked a defeat, or at least a serious set-back. In Scotland the Presbyterian system had been the one in which religion, since the Reformation, had found its natural means of self-organisation : to Scotch Protestantism, Presbyterian ecclesiastical arrangements had been the instinctive movements by means of which it drew its breath. But the matter was entirely different when an enforcement of the Presbyterian system was attempted upon English religious life.[3] This was insistence upon organisation again—and, in consequence, a direct negation of what the Nonconformist spirit would have prescribed. It ought to be said, however, in order to a full understanding of the situation, that English Presbyterianism in its revival was at any rate a shade less

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[1] Morley, *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 177. Gardiner, *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 43. Rushworth (*Historical Collections*, III. ii. 480) erroneously includes Cromwell's name among the signatories at St. Margaret's. Dale (*History of English Congregationalism*, p. 269) repeats the mistake. But it is quite impossible that Cromwell can have been there. See Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas), i. 158.

[2] Masson, *Life of Milton*, ii. 237-268.

[3] It is sometimes denied that such an enforcement was contemplated. But the facts are clear to any one who reads the Covenant without preconceptions. " The Church of the Covenant is not specified by name ; it is simply described as meant to be 'according to the Word of God and the example of the best reformed churches' ; but as we know the persons who drew up the instrument, what but Presbyterianism can be understood as the ecclesiastical system intended by these expressions ? " (Stoughton, *History of Religion in England*, ed. 1881, i. 296.)

violently bigoted than the earlier English Presbyterianism
of Cartwright had been. As to some of the laymen who
accepted the alliance with the Scots, more even than this
could be said ; for it was only in the nature of things that a
religious system to which at the bidding of expediency they
sent out an invitation should appear to them rather as a guest
with whom they might commune on equal terms than as a
specially holy visitor before whom they must veil their eyes
and adore. Cromwell took the Covenant in the end, like his
fellow-members of Parliament ; but Cromwell had already,
in the earlier negotiations for the " Assembly of Divines "
which was soon to meet, contended that places ought to be
found for representatives of the Independent congregations ; [1]
and from his subsequent course it is clear that Presbyterianism
could never have been to him the sacrosanct affair it was to
the Scots themselves. We may justifiably surmise that not
a few others, even though they did not actually accept
Independency as Cromwell did, fell short of a full-powered
appreciation of its alleged " divine right." But even for its
clerical adherents Presbyterianism, at this its second English
birth, was not quite what it had been to the Cartwright
school. Those ministers who had come to Presbyterianism
by the Puritan road, on whom interest in and sympathy with
Presbyterianism had almost insensibly grown as they watched
the struggle in the north, would hardly be so thick-mailed in
prejudice as those to whom Presbyterianism had seemed to
come in the glory of a direct revelation from heaven. English
Presbyterianism, fervent though it was, has to be taken as
being nearly always one or two degrees below the tempera-
ture of the Scotch. The occasional uncertainties of Baillie
concerning the outcome, as he watched the Westminster
Assembly's debates, stand as incontrovertible proof.[2] We
know, indeed, that one of the English Presbyterians—Edmund
Calamy—strongly objected to the calling in of Scotch aid,
his patriotism holding it shameful that for the maintenance

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[1] Others had been associated with Cromwell in this endeavour (Dale, *History
of English Congregationalism*, p. 265).

[2] *Letters and Journals* (ed. Bannatyne Club), ii. 177, 198, 211, 228, 315
and many other instances. Baillie felt it necessary to enlist the sympathies of the
Reformed Churches abroad, but his appeals, direct or indirect, did not always
receive replies sufficiently strong to please him (*ibid.* ii. 181, 184, 239, 311, etc.).

of their liberties Englishmen should not find sufficient resources within themselves.[1]   The speech at any rate shows that he was shamed for the necessity of summoning the Scotch, assuming the necessity to exist.   Baxter, although he became a staunch Presbyterian as the thunder of the crisis broke, would never—even before the gracious tolerance of his old age came upon him to make his always beautiful character more tenderly beautiful still—have held the attitude towards non-Presbyterians that the earlier Presbyterian propagandists had held, and would certainly never have said that only in Presbyterianism was salvation to be found. So much, in regard to the Presbyterian revival in the south, must in fairness be said.   The difference in the degree of zeal between the earlier and later Presbyterianism may not have amounted to much ; but a certain difference did exist, and existing, was bound to become more accentuated as time went on.   But if this be understood and allowed for, we may repeat, as the salient point of the situation created by the alliance of 1643, that for the true Nonconformist spirit the alliance—inasmuch as the alliance involved an enforcement of the Presbyterian system upon English religion, and inasmuch as this enforcement in its turn implied the exaltation of organisation over life—that for the true Nonconformist spirit the alliance spelt at any rate a temporary defeat.

But the defeat was to be no more than temporary.   If the Presbyterian plant was the one which, from 1640 to 1643, grew the fastest, there were also coming up some other plants which, when fully unfolded, would prevent the entire garden from wearing a Presbyterian hue.   The day of Presbyterianism might be the nearest at hand ; but Independency, too, saw its day afar off and was glad.   Of that expectation of a new era which, as has been mentioned, woke with the calling of the Long Parliament in the hearts of men, the Independents possessed no small share ; and just as the tide of Puritan emigration ceased to flow, and indeed began to recoil shorewards again—many of the Puritan clergy returning home from Holland, some few even from America—so Independency contributed its wave to

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[1] David, *Annals of Nonconformity in Essex*, p. 535.

the deepening of the sea. Indeed, to make the statement complete, we have to add that some who had gone out as Puritans came back as Independents, their study of ecclesiastical matters in the quietude of exile having led them to the adoption of the Congregational idea. As one would expect, Holland contributed the majority of the homeward bound ; and of those repatriated from Holland the " Five Brethren," who were destined to hold the Independent fort in the uncongenial atmosphere of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Sidrach Simpson, Jeremiah Burroughes and William Bridge, are the outstanding names. Their original protest, they recognise in a publication of 1644,[1] had been purely negative ; but while abroad, they had looked into " the light part " of the matter, and had done so with no bias to any particular view. " We had, of all men, the greatest reason to be true to our own consciences in what we should embrace, seeing it was for our consciences that we were deprived, at once, of whatever was dear to us. We had no new commonwealths to rear, to frame church government unto, —whereof any one piece might stand in the other's light,— to cause the least variation by us from the primitive pattern. . . . We had nothing else to do but simply, and singly, to consider how to worship God acceptably, and so most according to His Word."[2] The strengthening of home Independency by the accession of men like these quickened its courage, made it better realise its own weight and the weight it might acquire, and caused it to come out more boldly into the light of day. Undoubtedly the Independent position was as yet beset with difficulties : an Independent congregation was in strictness illegal still ; and the heads of the reforming party in Church and State, however they might dislike the Laudian system and the semi-Catholic methods and ideas which Laud had brought in, were not, for the most part, ready to give Separation a free pass. Soon after the meeting of the Long Parliament, Henry Burton, one of

[1] *An Apologetical Narration Humbly submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament.* For a summary, see Hanbury, *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents*, ii. 221-230.

[2] *An Apologetical Narration Humbly submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament*, pp. 3, 4.

Laud's victims, who had been fined, imprisoned, pilloried, and mutilated for writing against Laudian innovations,[1] was enlarged with honour.[2] But when, having embraced Independency, he published his *Protestation Protested*[3] in 1641—the book being a " protest " against a " Protestation " which Parliament required from all office-bearers, clerical or secular, to the effect that they would maintain the Protestant religion as "expressed in the doctrine of the Church of England "[4]—the printer was sent to prison for six weeks.[5] Jessey, the minister of the first Southwark Congregational Church, underwent temporary arrest in August of the same year.[6] But the general treatment of Separatism was mildness *in excelsis* compared with that which it would have received under Laud ; and there were numerous signs that the days of extreme severity had gone by. When the Deadman's Place congregation, worshipping more openly than had been its wont, was arrested in January of 1641, the Lords before whom they were brought did indeed censure them, and order them to repair to their parish Churches in future. But " instead of inflicting any penalty, they treated them with a great deal of respect and civility." More surprising still, on the following Sunday morning three or four of the Peers attended worship at Deadman's Place, and " at their departure, signified their satisfaction in what they had heard and seen, and their inclination to come again."[7] It is little wonder that Independency, feeling the breath of spring, began to tread with more elastic step and more uplifted head—little wonder that instead of being content passively to endure, or to burn with faint and flickering flame in any remote corners where it could shield itself from persecution's winds, it sought to set its candle in equal rank with the rest. This new temper in Independency

[1] *A Narrative of the Life of Mr. Henry Burton*, p. 10 ff.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 38.

[3] For a survey of the book, consult Hanbury, *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents*, ii. 83-97. It was Burton's book that first led Baxter to a detailed study of the ecclesiastical problem (*True History of Councils*, p. 90).

[4] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, i. 330-332.

[5] Dale, *History of English Congregationalism*, p. 370.

[6] *Life and Death of Mr. Henry Jessey*, by E. W., p. 11.

[7] Crosby, *History of the Baptists*, i. 162, 163. The Lords' Journals mistakenly call the congregation an " Anabaptist " one (this being again a confusion for " Baptist "). Hence Crosby's dealing with the matter.

is an unmistakable mark of the time. Presbyterianism had
got the start, but Independency was swiftly girding up its
loins. As early as December of 1640 the watchful Baillie
was looking suspiciously towards the Separatists as a quarter
whence he scented danger, although his perpetual see-saw
between fearfulness and cheerfulness about them and their
influence was dipping at the moment to the side of cheer.
" Saye and Brooke in the Higher House, and these alone,
and some leading men in the Lower House, were suspected
by their inclination to the Separatists, would divide from
the Presbyterians, and so weaken the party opposite the
Bishops ; but so far as yet can be perceived, that party
inclinable to separation will not be considerable." [1]   By
December, he is reduced to remarking in less confident tone,
" The Separatists are like to be some help to hold up the
Bishops through their impertinency ; but we trust, by God's
blessing on our labours, to prevent that evil." [2]   Later on,
while more than once, with a great effort at self-persuasion,
expressing the opinion that the Independent party is not
" considerable," he adds almost in the same breath other
expressions which show that he thinks it very considerable
indeed.   In fact, from the beginning of the association
between Scotch and English affairs, the Scotsmen had
discerned in Independency a foe who was likely to prove
himself worthy of their best steel ; as is shown by the
inclusion among their commissioners of Mr. Robert Blair
" to satisfy the minds of many in England who love the
way of New England better than that of Presbyteries used
in our Church." [3]   And assuredly neither Episcopalian nor
Presbyterian from 1640 onwards, could take Independency
to be a negligible quantity, whatever his opinion as to its
merits might be.   Independency resolutely refused to be
slightly esteemed.   Independent communities multiplied : it
is to 1641 that Bishop Hall's wail about the " fourscore
congregations of sectaries " in and about London belongs ; [4]
and even if it be true, as the excited and indignant Bishop
declares, that some of these were " instructed by cobblers

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[1] Baillie, *Letters and Journals* (ed. Bannatyne Club), i. 275.
[2] *Ibid.* i. 282.   [3] *Ibid.* i. 269.
[4] *Supra*, p. 296.   *The Brownists' Synagogue* (pp. 2-5) gives many of the
meeting-places and some of the preachers' names.

and such-like trash" who were the "guides fit for them,"
we know that some of the newly-settled ministers of the
country carried weight—as, for example, the William
Bridge previously mentioned among the "Five Brethren,"
he being chosen to preside over the Congregational Church
constituted at Yarmouth and Norwich in 1642.[1]   Colchester
saw the founding of a Congregational Church in the same
year.[2]   The Baptists pushed their controversy well to the
fore, joining in public disputation with a Dr. Featley in 1641.[3]
The same year saw a General Baptist Church meeting in
Bishopsgate Street :[4] another is believed to have been
founded in Bell Alley before the outbreak of the Civil
War ;[5] while the record of a tumult on account of another
Baptist congregation in Fleet Street (whether caused by
the arrest of the members or by the dislike of the mob
seems uncertain) has also been preserved.[6]   1641 is also
the date of origin of the Calvinistic Baptist Church at
Worcester.[7]   On the field of literary controversy Independ-
ency flourished a brave sword.   Here again the fierceness
of the attacks directed against it from the Presbyterian
side shows how ominous for Presbyterian ascendancy it was
held to be.   Against Burton's *Protestation Protested* a writer
named Geree took up his parable,[8] while Edwards—later
on to be the author of the famous *Gangrena*—fulminated
against any proposal to tolerate the Independent way.[9]
But Independency was in no mood to suffer any word of
exhortation couched in speech like this.   It is the offensive,
rather than the defensive, note that is struck in all its
literary products through these years.   In addition to
Burton's own book, there appeared in the Congregational
defence, or rather as a movement in the Congregational

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[1] Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), i. 359.

[2] *Congregational Year Book.*

[3] Crosby, *History of English Baptists*, i. 152-154. Ivimey, *History of English Baptists*, i. 164.

[4] Taylor, *History of General Baptists*, i. 119.   This Church is frequently described as Calvinistic Baptist, but the weight of evidence is the other way.

[5] *Ibid.* i. 98 ff.   [6] Ivimey as former note, i. 158, 159.

[7] *Baptist Year Book.*

[8] *Vindiciae voti : or A Vindication of the True Sense of the National Covenant.* Accounts of this and of the other books on both sides may be found in Hanbury, *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents*, ii. chaps. 38-41.

[9] *Reasons against the Independent Government of Particular Congregations.*

attack, a volume by the Lord Robert Brooke [1] who, it will
be remembered, was mentioned by Baillie in association
with Lord Saye as representing Separatism in the House
of Peers—and another by a female champion, Catherine
Chidley,[2] this last being specially intended as an answer to
one of Edwards' bitter assaults.   It is noteworthy that
through the Independent utterances of this period the growth
of the idea of toleration—a flower soon to appear in full and
perfect bloom—is discernible as proceeding apace.   "Let
not the consciences of God's people be bound," says
Burton, "where Christ hath purchased liberty";[3] and not
twice nor thrice, but many times, the same note is struck.
It was this tendency, indeed, that particularly excited
Presbyterian fear and wrath; and it was on this point that
many of the heated discussions of the coming years were to
turn.   It was not altogether well that the question of
toleration should thus be conjoined with the question of
Independency's general and fundamental principle; for so
there came a tendency to look upon the principle of toleration
as itself being and exhausting that general and fundamental
principle—a tendency which the Independents themselves
did not altogether escape.   An accessory and associated
idea—particularly if it be itself an important one—easily
slips too far up the scale of interests.   The point will
present itself again.   Meanwhile it is worth noting—citing
this current Independent literature for testimony—that just
when Independency could congratulate itself on having
something like a secure future before it, the light of tolera-
tion began to shine more and more clearly in its eyes.
Perhaps, however, the most influential literary defence of
Independency proceeded from the pen of one who was
himself not in England at all.   John Cotton of Boston in
America—named at an earlier stage as one of Laud's
Puritan emigrants—had, like many more, passed from
Puritanism to Independency in the New World.   So much,
indeed, had this come to be accepted as the normal order of
things over there that Independency was in these years

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[1] *A Discourse opening the Nature of that Episcopacy which is exercised in
England.*   Milton eulogises Brooke in *Areopagitica* (*Prose Works*, ed Bohn, ii. 95).
[2] *The Justification of the Independent Churches of Christ.*
[3] *The Protestation Protested*, p. 15 (the tract is not paged).

often spoken of, as we have already found Baillie speaking of it, as "the New England way." Cotton, though pressed by many at home to come back and sustain the Independent cause, had declined to return to the house of bondage, notwithstanding that the fetters were being knocked off or were at least galling less ; but he sent over the manuscript of a pamphlet on *The Constitution of a Particular Visible Church* which was published in 1642. Among the probably numerous converts it made was one—John Owen [1]—who, having picked it up with the intention of confuting it, was fain to admit that it confuted him. So the voice of Independency rose higher and higher. So it put forward, with ever more insistent steadfastness, its claim to be heard in the great cause which was being tried. Adding sign to sign, we see that Independency was becoming conscious of its call to be one of the shaping forces of the future— that if not an actually shaping force, a modifying force at least it might already claim to be, and that even while Presbyterian dominance was moving to an inevitable noon-tide, it was moving to an equally inevitable twilight too.

But for the moment the Presbyterian triumph was real. The Westminster Assembly of Divines, summoned by Parliament to render assistance in revising the religious system of the country, was overwhelmingly Presbyterian : it read its instructions in a large sense, going far beyond the merely advisory functions to which, according to the first idea, it was to have been confined ; and in the end, though not till after strenuous controversy with both Parliament and the Independents, it had its way. Its almost exclusively Presbyterian composition was in part due to circumstances. The idea of a " Synod " had for some time been in the air. The Grand Remonstrance had prayed the King to sanction its calling, and two Bills for the purpose were subsequently vainly presented for the royal assent, one of them giving a list of the names of the proposed members, and mentioning among these certain Bishops and others known to favour the perpetuation of Episcopacy.[2] When in 1643 the

[1] Owen's *Works* (ed. 1850-1855), xix. 274.
[2] The list of actual partakers in the proceedings is prefixed to Dr. A. F. Mitchell's *Baird Lectures on the Westminster Assembly*.

Houses found that they must act without royal concurrence
if they were to act at all, and accordingly passed an
Ordinance [1] definitely summoning the Assembly, the same
list of names was set out.   But the movement of events, and
specially the taking of the Covenant (the Assembly itself
was present with the Parliament on the great occasion)
changed the entire aspect of affairs.   The favourers of
Episcopacy withdrew.   Some of them, indeed, had never
attended at all.   It was only with the " five Independent
brethren " that the Presbyterians had to reckon henceforth,
so far as dissentients within the Assembly itself were
concerned.   The American Churches had been invited to
send delegates,[2] but enthusiasm for such a mission had not
kindled in the colony, and the spirit which those from over-
seas might have breathed across the proceedings failed to
move upon the waters' face.   It is no wonder that under
such circumstances—with hardly any competing instruments
in the Assemby Hall—Presbyterianism should set its trumpet
to its lips and blow a very loud blast indeed.   It is no
wonder that the attitude of the Presbyterian majority
stiffened, and that toleration and compromise came to have
smaller and smaller chance as time went on.   The Assembly
showed all through a disposition which would not be content
with merely waiting upon Parliament in the capacity of
counsellor, and was evidently bent upon the establishment
of a rigid Presbyterianism to the practical exclusion of every
other form of worship and Church government.   That
according to the original intention of Parliament the Assembly
was to be strictly subordinate and to take no initiative of
its own, is made abundantly clear by the words of the
summoning Act.   In the Assembly's consideration of religious
affairs, its members were to consider such matters of doctrine,
discipline, and liturgy " as shall be proposed to them by
both or either of the said Houses of Parliament, and no
other " ; and they were to " deliver their opinions or advices
of or touching the matters aforesaid, as shall be most
agreeable to the word of God, to both or either of the said

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[1] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. ii. 337-339 ; Husband's *Collection
of Public Orders*, etc., pp. 208-210 ; Scobell, *A Collection of Acts and Ordinances*,
etc. i. 42-44.

[2] Winthrop, *History of New England, 1630-1649*, ii. 91, 92.

Houses from time to time, in such manner and sort as by either or both of the said Houses of Parliament shall be required." [1]   But to play so subordinate a *rôle* as this was not to the taste of the Presbyterian party, least of all to the taste of the Scotch Commissioners who, in the final Ordinance, were numbered among those called to meet. By January 1645 the Assembly had become so far paramount as to obtain from Parliament a number of Resolutions which in effect declared the Presbyterian system, with its particular conceptions of Church order and ministry and its whole apparatus of presbyteries and Assemblies, to be the system desirable in England ; [2] and in the summer of 1646, events having broken down whatever power of resistance Parliament still retained, there followed a definite enactment for the setting up of the system which the Resolutions had approved.[3]   It was the Assembly, not the Parliament, that really took in hand the threads out of which the pattern of events, on their religious side, was woven ; and the Parliament, though it (so to say) grabbed at one or the other thread as the Assembly snatched it away, and now and then endeavoured to administer a vigorous pull in this direction or in that with such threads as it retained, did little more than serve the Assembly's ends. Parliament, as we have noted, was by no means so earnestly Presbyterian as the clergy ; but it was not allowed to lag very far behind.

But even after 1643 Presbyterianism found a by no means quite unimpeded way up the hill which led it to its climax of 1646. Independency contended throughout for a more liberal view of the situation, and for a more generous method of dealing with it, than the Assembly as a whole desired ; and its representatives extorted the reluctant admiration of Baillie himself (who, having gone home to Scotland after the settlement of the Scotch problem in 1641, returned to London as one of the Assembly's delegates) by the fine fight they made.   " The Independent men, whereof there are some ten or eleven in the Synod," he

[1] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. ii. 338.
[2] *Ibid.* III. ii. 865, 866. Whitelock, *Memorials of English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), i. 362.
[3] Whitelock, *Memorials of English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), ii. 30.

calls "very able men."[1]   They were assuredly not lacking
in boldness.   Early in 1644 Philip Nye made in the
Assembly itself a speech which actually denounced Presby-
terianism as a danger to the State—a speech so irritating
to the majority that the speaker was at last cried down.[2]
But the Independent speeches made in the Assembly,
however small might be the effect they produced upon votes
and decisions there, were really addressed not so much to
the immediate audience as to the public outside : they were
linked with utterances in pulpit and in press to make a
concerted appeal to those outside the Chamber's walls ;
and with these other means of persuasion they won among
the public many a convert to the Independent cause.   At
first it had seemed that some accommodation between the
contending parties might be found ; and a letter, bearing
both Independent and Presbyterian signatures, was actually
issued at an early stage, requesting people in general to
abstain from the formation of new Congregations until the
outcome of the discussion should become clear.[3]   But it
was quickly manifest that the gulf could not be easily
bridged ; and Presbyterian determination froze solid when the
Scotch Commissioners arrived.   The crucial point—though
not the one appearing oftenest for discussion upon the agenda
—between Independency and Presbyterianism had become
that of toleration.   The issue was not merely or principally
a clear one between two rival Church polities.   The
Presbyterians desired not alone the establishment of Presby-
terianism, but the suppression of all other systems : liberty
of conscience had now become the motto upon the Independent
flag.   It was against difficulties with the Parliament—most
of whose members, while having (with the exception of a
small but growing section) no special care for liberty of
conscience, resented the dictatorial spirit of the Divines—and
against difficulties with the Independents, who realised that

[1] *Letters and Journals* (ed. Bannatyne Club), ii. 110.   Baillie makes up his
"ten or eleven" by counting in some Independents who were not actually
members of the Assembly, but who occasionally helped their friends there.   The
Independent delegates were the five mentioned previously (*supra*, p. 326).
[2] Hetherington, *History of the Westminster Assembly* (4th ed.), pp. 200,
201.
[3] Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 426.

once again a crisis jeopardising their very lives had arrived
—that the Presbyterian spirit had to make its way. Its
progress to victory was fought inch by inch. The early
discussion upon the Thirty-Nine Articles was hardly likely
to reveal any great differences of view among the Assembly's
members, since the Calvinistic theological platform was
occupied by Independents and Presbyterians alike. But
when the question of Church polity was approached—as it
had to be in compliance with an order from Parliament sent
to the Assembly in October 1643 [1]—the winds of controversy
rose. The respective conceptions of pastor, elder, deacon,
congregation, and of the respective powers and functions of
each, were debated and re-debated, every debate only
serving to reveal how irreconcilable the Presbyterian and
Independent conceptions were.[2] Of course the Independents
were beaten. The first-fruits of the discussion, so far as
the practical reform of the Church was concerned, consisted
of a " Directory for Ordination " submitted by the Assembly
to the Parliament in April of 1644.[3] The power of
ordination, according to this " Directory," resided in
associations of ministers already duly ordained—a principle
directly contrary, of course, to that of Independency, which
looked upon the " call " to the ministry as being trans-
mitted from heaven through the Church or congregation
itself. Parliament at first demurred to accepting the
scheme, or at least to accepting it as of universal and
exclusive validity, though willing to set up the suggested
machinery of ministerial judging bodies for special cases [4]—
this partial willingness arising from the fact that many
benefices stood vacant through the action of the parlia-
mentary Committees (Committee " for scandalous ministers "
and others) which had for the last three years been
dealing with ministers unfit, or supposed to be unfit, for
their posts. But for the Assembly, particularly for its
Scotch members, so half-hearted a courtesy-bow to their
propositions would by no means suffice,[5] and its energetic

[1] Hetherington, *History of the Westminster Assembly* (4th ed.), p. 152.
[2] *Ibid*. chapters iv. and v.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 172.   [4] *Ibid.* p. 173.
[5] See Baillie, *Letters and Journals* (ed. Bannatyne Club), ii. 196, 221,
223.

protest compelled the House to submit—the original
" Directory " being promulgated in October.[1]   Meanwhile,
as the larger questions of Church organisation, and of how
far any particular Church organisation might be enforced
upon the people by the civil power, came under review, the
Independents found the current in the Assembly running
with increasing strength against them ; but they were ever
ready with a reason for the faith that was in them, were
nearly always temperate in the statement and argument of
their case, and especially insistent that no weapons other
than spiritual should be employed in Christianity's war.
Other materials for judging the case as between Presby-
terianism and Independency, besides those which the
discussion afforded, were accumulating ; for in February of
this same year orders were issued to the effect that every
person over eighteen throughout the kingdom should " take the
Covenant," [2] an ordinance against which Baxter, Presbyterian
as he was, protested with all his power ; [3] and in August
1644 the Commons, spurred on by the Assembly, enjoined
the destruction of altars, crosses, pictures, and all other
things which might be termed the ornamental helps (or, as
the iconoclasts would have said, hindrances) to the worship
of God.[4]   The rival Independent and Presbyterian systems
—albeit the one in theory only and the other in practice and
embodied fact—were, in the discussions of the Assembly
and in the practical measures adopted at the Assembly's
bidding, making their competing appeals for a verdict to the
judgment of men.   And differences became more and more
sharply accentuated as the discussions on the larger question
of Church organisation—both before and after the decision
on the matter of Ordination—progressed.   A few sentences
from Dr. Dale's presentation of the dispute will serve to
show what was the system on which the Presbyterian
majority was bent, and its entire incompatibility with the
Independent ideal.   " In the Presbyterian system congrega-

[1] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. ii. 781.   Hetherington, *History of
the Westminster Assembly* (4th ed.), p. 242.
[2] Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, i. 301.   Husband's *Collection
of Public Orders*, etc., pp. 420, 421.
[3] Neal, *History of The Puritans*, iii. 67.
[4] *Ibid.* iii. 40, 41 ; see also Stoughton, *History of Religion in England*
(ed. 1881), i. 310-314.

tions in the same neighbourhood are associated together ;
their pastors and elders form a presbytery, or ' classis,' of the
district : the presbyteries are confederated and represented
in a Provincial Synod ; and above the Synod there is a
National Assembly. No decision of a particular congrega-
tion is final, either in relation to the appointment of its
officers or their removal ; either in relation to worship or
discipline ; either in relation to the faith of the Church or
its practice. There is always an appeal to a higher court ;
and the decision of the highest court is authoritative. ' The
five Dissenting Brethren,' on the other hand, maintained the
independence of every separate Church." [1] This may be
taken as a succinct and adequate exposition of the strictly
ecclesiastical point of difference ; but it must always be
remembered that the question was now not only one as to
the best or truest form of Church government, but one as to
how far any form of Church organisation might be enforced
by the civil power—in other words, that the supreme
problem of toleration was always knocking at the door even
when it was not actually taking part in the debates, always
present in the mind even when not emerging upon the
tongue. Lingard rightly emphasises this as the chief
matter at issue. " The Presbyterians sought to introduce a
gradation of spiritual authorities in presbyteries, classes,
synods and assemblies ; giving to these several judicatories
the power of the keys, that is, of censuring, suspending,
depriving, and excommunicating delinquents. They main-
tained that such a power was essential to the church ; that
to deny it was to rend into fragments the seamless robe of
Christ, to encourage disunion and schism, and to open the
door to every species of theological war. On the other
hand, their adversaries contended that all congregations of
worshippers were co-ordinate and independent ; that synods
might advise, but could not command ; that multiplicity of
sects must necessarily result from the variableness of the
human judgment, and the obligation of worshipping God
according to the dictates of conscience ; and that religious
toleration was the birthright of every human being, whatever
were his speculative creed or the form of worship which he

[1] *History of English Congregationalism*, p. 275.

preferred." [1]   So the discussions drove on.   In the autumn
of 1644 the Presbyterian scheme was carried by the
Assembly's vote, a "Directory for Public Worship" being
completed a little later on. [2]   But when the scheme was
laid before Parliament, there was delay.   The "Five
Brethren" had made a weighty statement of their objections
both in the Assembly and, subsequently, to the Parliament
itself ; [3] and indeed Parliament, largely under the influence of
Cromwell—who, having found that in order to win his
battles he must model his army from the best materials, be
that material Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, or any-
thing else, had come back to his place in the House to plead
for some elasticity in the adopted scheme of Church
reform—Parliament had already in September issued to the
Assembly an order to the effect that it should seek some
way "how far tender consciences, who cannot in all things
submit to the common rule which shall be established, may
be borne with, according to the Word, and as may stand with
the public peace." [4]   No notice was taken of the order—
Baillie speaks of it with unmitigated disgust [5]—and no
provision on the suggested lines was found in the Assembly's
scheme when this was set before the House.   It may have
been for this reason that Lords and Commons, while setting
into force the "Directory for Worship" and abolishing the
Prayer-Book (in January 1645), would go no further in
regard to general Church polity than the passing of Resolu-
tions whereby the Presbyterian scheme was theoretically
accepted, [6] and postponed actual legislation for its embodi-
ment ; while Parliament further proved itself indisposed to
entire subserviency by entering upon a rather acrimonious
controversy with the Assembly upon the question of per-
mitting an appeal to itself from the judgment of Church
Courts in cases of excommunication or of the exclusion of
"scandalous and ignorant persons" from the Lord's Supper. [7]
Some compensation for Parliament's unwillingness to toe

[1] *History of England* (ed. 1853), viii. 37.
[2] Hetherington, *History of the Westminster Assembly* (4th ed.), pp. 175, 243.
[3] *Ibid.* pp. 213-221.   [4] *Ibid.* pp, 209, 210.
[5] *Letters and Journals* (ed. Bannatyne Club), ii. 226, 230.
[6] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. ii. 839, 865, 866 ; Whitelock,
Memorials of English Affairs, etc. (ed. 1853), i. 362.
[7] Hetherington, *History of the Westminster Assembly* (4th ed.), pp. 246 ff.

their line may have been found by the Presbyterian party in the execution of Laud, who, just after the merely theoretical acceptance of Presbyterianism and the abolition of the Prayer-Book, was sent to his account,[1] praying with wistful pathos on the scaffold, " Lord, I am coming to thee as fast as I can." [2] //How far the quarrel would have developed had not circumstances made it absolutely necessary for Parliament to surrender, it is impossible to say. As it was, it dragged on with increasing warmth through 1645 and the early part of 1646. The Assembly steadfastly urged action in order that what seemed to it (and in many instances probably was) a serious evil might be dealt with. Parliament as steadfastly refused to grant " an arbitrary and unlimited power and jurisdiction " to the Church authorities or to give up its own right of final interference.[3] It re-affirmed its previous resolutions as to the acceptableness of the Assembly's scheme, but it carried the war into the enemy's country by reserving the right to consider the amount of toleration which under the new settlement, when it came, should still be allowed.[4] All this while the ship of Presbyterian establishment was quarantined outside its desired haven. But 1646 brought a compulsory change in the Parliament's mood. Taking advantage of the controversies among his foes, Charles sought to establish an understanding with the Scotch, gave himself into the hands of their army, and held out hopes that he would himself take the Covenant—a prospect which induced the Scotch Commissioners in London to press upon Parliament the desirability of negotiations with the King.[5] For the moment, it seemed that unless Parliament abandoned political reform (for the worth of any promises Charles might make could be easily estimated by those who had the English experience behind them), and simultaneously surrendered all the points of dispute between the Assembly and itself, the Scotch army which had been called upon to aid England's cause might have to be confronted as an

[1] Whitelock, *Memorials of English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), i. 362.

[2] Heylin, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, p. 537 ; Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, III. ii. 839.

[3] Masson, *Life of Milton*, iii. 410.   [4] *Ibid.*

[5] Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, ii. 121.

enemy instead of used as an ally ; and although one element
of the double danger speedily passed away—the King
proving impracticable and Scotch hopes of accommodation
with him vanishing like the mirage—Parliament felt its
position too insecure for any further procrastination in
religious affairs.   It was clear that the Assembly, or the
Presbyterian majority, must have its will.   In June of 1646
the Presbyterian scheme of Church polity was definitely
ordered to be set up,[1] while the necessary concomitant destruc-
tive work was accomplished by an Act of the following
autumn, abolishing the dignities and titles of Archbishops
and Bishops, and appropriating their lands ; [2] and so the
seed sown in the alliance of 1643 yielded its full harvest
at last.   So far as the Assembly and its influence upon
policy were concerned Presbyterianism might well con-
gratulate itself upon the end.   For Parliament had been
out-manœuvred, and Independency, notwithstanding its
strenuous and honourable fight, had been beaten back from
the entrenchments it had tried to storm.

But outside the Assembly the victory of the Presbyterian
idea was far less complete.   The vigour and ability with
which the " Five Brethren " conducted the Independent case
before the great tribunal, reinforced by the voices and
influence of coadjutors who did not actually plead within
the court, had their reward.   It has been said that the
Independent argument, even that part of it which became
vocal within the Westminster walls, was designed to impress
the public rather than the immediate audience.   In pursuance
of the same policy, the press was largely employed for the
dissemination of Independent ideas.   When it first became
clear that the struggle was going to be severe, and that the
minority could entertain little hope of being at all con-
sidered in the final decision, the " Five Brethren " issued
the *Apologetical Narration* spoken of before,[3] making there
a complete presentment of their case, and doing it so
thoroughly that Baillie—always a reliable thermometer in
such matters—says of it, " The thing itself coming out at

[1] Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), ii. 30 ;
Hetherington, *History of the Westminster Assembly* (4th ed.), pp. 273, 274.
[2] Scobell, *Collection of Acts and Ordinances, etc.*, i. 99.
[3] *Supra*, p. 326.

this time, was very apt to have kindled a fire."[1]   And this
was only the beginning of a literary discussion which raged
furiously, and which must have been followed by the "man
in the street" with zest.   A descriptive list of the books
and pamphlets written on both sides would cover a good
many pages, and will not be attempted here.   The study
can easily be pursued by those who care to do so.[2]   The
discussion was not always good-tempered ; and when the
Apologetical Narration had provoked a rejoinder entitled
The Anatomy of Independency, and this in its turn had
called forth *The Anatomist Anatomised* from the Inde-
pendent ranks, the fire had been at any rate well laid.
Matches to kindle it and coals to feed it were not lacking.
The climax of bitterness was reached in the famous *Gan-
grena* of Edwards,[3] published in 1646 (Edwards having
previously trained himself by some preliminary explosions)
which, by dint of putting Independents into the same list of
dangerous heretics as Anabaptists, Familists, and so forth—
and further by enumerating the same "sect" two or three
times over under different names—contrived to make it
appear that, if Independency were tolerated there would
follow the deluge, and the end of all things would be at hand.
But the bitterness of Edwards and other Presbyterian con-
troversialists is clearly enough due to chagrin at the headway
which Independency was making, while, on the other hand,
the very fierceness of the argument would but draw men's
minds still more powerfully to consideration of a question
which had power so greatly to heat the blood.   Other
incidents kept the dispute and the disputants close against
the front of the stage.   Independent preachers—Hugh
Peters, Caryl, and Jeremiah Burroughes, among others—[4]
lifted up their voices unfearing before Lords and Commons
as opportunity offered ; and, however much Lords or
Commons might object, the preachers' word did not return
unto them void.   By the beginning of 1646 Baillie realised
that the dreaded idea of "toleration"—now so thoroughly

[1] *Letters and Journals* (ed. Bannatyne Club), ii. 130.
[2] Most of the books will be found summarised in Hanbury's *Historical
Memorials relating to the Independents*, vols. ii. and iii.
[3] *Ibid.* iii. chaps. 68 and 69.
[4] Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 457, 458, 460, etc.

grasped and so courageously preached by men like John
Goodwin that liberty was claimed even for Papists, Turks,
and Jews [1]—was sweeping on with the strength of a rushing
mighty wind, and had to find what consolation he could in
the fact that the ministers of London were going to petition
the Assembly to take measures against the fell disease.[2]
But they might petition.   In reality the case was, from
Baillie's standpoint, past all hope.   At least two men in the
very front rank had become Independent converts by this
time.   In each case practical considerations, rather than
considerations purely theoretical, had perhaps been at work ;
but conversion was none the less—possibly rather more—
complete and fervid.   The pressure of practical considera-
tions, in fact, had, for both Cromwell and Milton, caused
them to understand their own minds more fully—had
uncovered for them the countenance of an idea which had
been present, but veiled, before.   Military necessities had
forced Cromwell to fill his New Model army with men who
were animated by a true spirit of endurance and by a true
love of liberty ; he had, as he came to feel more deeply that
through the English struggle against despotism, and through
the part he was taking in that struggle, God's will was
fulfilling itself, come to feel also that a religious temper in
the soldiers whom he led would be worth to each of them a
thousand swords ; and he had found that, so long as religion
was real, the member of no one denomination could claim
for his purposes an advantage over the rest.   " Sir, they are
trusty : I beseech you, in the name of God, not to discourage
them," he wrote to Speaker Lenthal after Naseby, as if
wondering (not without reason) whether the mood of the
Parliament might not prove to be somewhat narrower than
his own.[3]   So he had come to the full " toleration " idea,
and to belief in the Independency which wrote that idea
upon its programme—being no doubt established in his
faith by the fact that, as it happened, it was the Independents
who were gathered in greatest numbers round his standard.
Cromwell had travelled a long way since he had justified

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[1] *A Reply of Two of the Brethren to A. S.*, pp. 55, 56.   That portion of this
book which deals with toleration was written by Goodwin.

[2] *Letters and Journals* (ed. Bannatyne Club), ii. 344.

[3] Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed Lomas), i. 205.

himself for saying to a clergyman in Ely Cathedral, when the latter persisted in the use of the Prayer-Book, " Leave your fooling, sir, and come down," by declaring himself to be a " man under authority."[1] His feeling in regard to the Prayer-Book would in all probability have been still the same ; but he would have based his action, had he taken it, on different grounds. The " authority " of the Parliament would scarcely now have been the final word. And as men heard that the army in which the Independents so largely predominated had gone on from victory to victory—from Marston Moor to Newbury, from Newbury to Naseby— the eyes turned upon Independency would grow more favourable, the minds accepting it increase. Milton, angered at the Presbyterian muzzling of the press, had withdrawn his countenance from the system he had favoured at first,[2] and then, taking nobler ground than the mere pressure of his personal grievances would have impelled him to take, pleaded for a religious liberty of almost the fullest order, declaring that " where there is much to desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions ; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making."[3] And Milton's name, as that of a favourer of the principal Independent position, could not but become, when it was so cited, an ensign to which not a few would seek. It is not meant that either Cromwell or Milton occupied exactly the same ground as the ordinary Independent ; but as between Presbyterian despotism and Independent liberty it is evident enough on which side the tellers for the division must count them. The idea of toleration—of course variously interpreted, more or less liberally stretched, according to the taste of individual advocates—was establishing itself even in minds far removed from the Independent plane. Jeremy Taylor, a faithful adherent to the Episcopal Church, and subsequently a Bishop, published the famous *Liberty of Prophesying* in 1647, taking up a position much like the latitudinarian one which Chillingworth had assumed. The

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[1] Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas), i. 167.

[2] Masson, *Life of Milton*, iii. 285.

[3] *Areopagitica* (*Prose Works*, ed. Bohn, ii. 92). Milton's doctrine of toleration, however, noble as it was, did not run quite so fast or so far as John Goodwin's. Romanists certainly were left still outside its cover.

stars in their courses fought Independency's battle ; and, spite of Presbyterianism's triumph in Assembly and in Parliament, the limits in which its writs would run were contracting, rather than enlarging, in the country of men's consciences and minds. And besides such outstanding signs of Independency's general progress as the conversions of Cromwell and Milton afford, and such presumptions of it as they justify, there is witness that, difficult as any actual and formal avowal of Independent principles must have been with a sort of Protestant Inquisition sitting at West-minster, even that was sometimes made. Henry Burton, expelled from his place in 1645, formed a Congregational Church at Stepney.[1] John Goodwin, deprived at the same time, established an Independent Congregation in his own parish of Coleman Street.[2] In other parts—for instance, at Sowerby in Yorkshire and Hatherlow in Cheshire—similar Churches had their birth in the same year.[3] In new parts of Kent—perhaps as the result of influence radiating from those Ashford secretaries over whose refusal to be exter-minated Laud had mourned [4]—Independent communities appeared, Canterbury, Dover, and Sandwich starting Churches in 1644 and 1645.[5] John Owen, whose conversion to Independency we have noted,[6] formed an Independent Church at Coggeshall in Essex in 1646.[7] How boldly some of the Independents obtruded themselves and their convictions upon the notice of their opponents is shown in Thomas Goodwin's demand, made in 1648, that he might have the use of the Parish Church of St. Michael, Crooked Lane, for a sacramental service with his own people.[8] The Baptists continued to press their own special controversy. To make their position clear, and to guard themselves from railing accusations, seven particular Baptist Churches of London published a " Confession of Faith " in 1643.[9]

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[1] Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 443, 444.

[2] Wilson, *History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches in London*, ii. 406.

[3] *Congregational Year Book.*   [4] *Supra*, p. 297.

[5] *Congregational Year Book.*   [6] *Supra*, p. 331.

[7] Fletcher, *Revival and Progress of Independency*, iv. 110.

[8] See the account in Shaw's *History of the English Church, 1640-1660*, ii. 130-132.

[9] Ivimey, *History of the English Baptists*, i. 175 ; Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, i. 170-172.

John Toombes boldly challenged the Westminster Assembly itself on the baptismal question;[1] and the Baptists of the city arranged a public disputation similar to the one we have heard of before—Edmund Calamy this time to be the anti-Baptist champion—which, however, the Lord Mayor intervened to prevent.[2]   To 1645 also, as we have previously noted, belongs the conversion to the Baptist position of Henry Jessey and the Southwark Independent Church,[3] as well as the gathering of a Baptist Church in Great St. Helens, London, under Hanserd Knollys,[4] the man whose persuasive influence turned Jessey to the Baptist way ; while Colonel Hutchinson may be named among the notable men of the period who embraced Baptist views.[5]   General Baptist Churches appear at this time at Spalding, Hunstanton, Warboys and various places in Kent.[6]   And although in some places, as in Norwich and Yarmouth, the Presbyterians attempted to suppress their ecclesiastical opponents, the effort met with but little success.[7]   All these things are signs that, even at the time of Presbyterianism's greatest triumph, there was no complete stretching of Presbyterian authority over the country as a whole ; and although, in the order by Parliament for the setting up of Presbyteries, passed in June 1646, the majority in the Westminster Assembly might have seemed to see its enemies made its footstool, it was only the immediate ground that had been swept clear. Elsewhere there were forces which had not hoisted the white flag and which were waiting ready for battle upon another and a wider field.   Once again the Nonconformist spirit grew passionate in its protest, in proportion as endeavour grew passionate to bind its hands and seal its lips.

The recorded facts as to the Presbyterian establishment, after the parliamentary enactment of 1646, bear out what has been said as to its incompleteness.   In London, certainly

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[1] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, i. 284-285.

[2] Placard in the British Museum quoted by Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), ii. 225.   [3] *Supra*, p. 299.

[4] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, i. 336.

[5] Ivimey, *History of the English Baptists*, i. 296-298.   *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson* (ed. Firth, 1906), pp. 242, 243.

[6] Taylor, *History of the General Baptists*, i. 104-108.

[7] Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), i. 495-498 ; Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 455.

—for London was enthusiastically Presbyterian—the new organisation was fully carried through, the City being divided into twelve Presbyteries, the number of parishes included in each, however, varying very considerably, and all the Presbyteries together constituting a Provincial Synod.[1] Lancashire, also, was highly organised according to the Presbyterian scheme.[2]   But elsewhere the matter hung fire. Plans, some of them elaborate, were indeed drawn up for one county and another,[3] but in most cases the net result was as though a sufficiently complicated scaffolding had been put upon a vacant site, without any attempt at erecting the building being subsequently made.   Even a comprehensive instruction from Lords and Commons (in August 1649) to the effect that *all* parishes in the kingdom must be definitely linked up with, and find a definite place in, a Presbyterian order,[4] failed to bring a really national Presbyterian Church, or even any passable semblance of it, to life. The " Confession of Faith " and the " Catechisms " prepared by the Westminster Assembly, and sanctioned by Parliament (the former as to the doctrinal part of it only) in 1648,[5] were much more widely acceptable than the system of Church organisation and discipline to which, in the Assembly's own view, they were subordinate, and have been in fact used among Independents as well as among Presbyterians from the time of their making to this.   But the actual Presbyterian Church, though so much desired, could not be created at a wave of the hand.   Perhaps a lack of ministers may have been a contributing cause of failure.   From the meeting of the Long Parliament the Committees for religion had been busy dealing with cases of ministerial delinquency, and expelling the occupiers of livings where they deemed it necessary so to do.   And without accepting exaggerated figures—such as those with which Walker, in his *Sufferings of*

[1] Drysdale, *History of the Presbyterians in England*, p. 310.

[2] Halley, *Lancashire, Its Puritanism and Nonconformity*, i. 436 ff. ; Husband's *Collection*, etc., p. 919.

[3] Drysdale, as former note, pp. 326-333 ; Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), i. 469 ; Shaw, *History of the English Church from 1640-1660*, ii. 28-33.

[4] Scobell, *Collection of Acts and Ordinances, etc.*, i. 165-180.

[5] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, IV. ii. 1035 ; Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), ii. 287, 298.

the Clergy, delights to harrow the souls of faithful Episcopalian readers—one is driven to believe that not a few parishes were left without proper spiritual instruction and guidance. The order for the universal taking of the Covenant was a test which, swept along the ranks of the clergy, must have bent them down as a breeze bends down the corn ; and Walker is probably right when he says that the Covenant was the severest blow dealt upon the Church of England pulpits even in those rough times.[1] Moreover, the Parliamentary Committees, and the local county Committees to which the business of investigation and reform was delegated, were men of ordinary human prejudices. Baxter, it is true, gives a testimonial to the general fairness of the Committees, and says that the great majority of the clergy they expelled deserved their fate. " Those that being able, godly preachers, were cast out for the war alone, as for their opinions' sake, were comparatively very few." [2] But an acceptance of the general truth of this statement leaves the probability of a good many exceptions still present to the mind. A charge against a strongly royalist clergyman would probably in many cases be looked upon as requiring less evidence to justify deprivation than a charge against an individual politically less strongly coloured would demand. And we know of two London ministers whose characters no word or breath of suspicion had dimmed, but who were driven from their pulpits simply because they were known to be possessed (not at all of royalist) but of Independent views. In 1645 Henry Burton and John Goodwin—the two alluded to—had to go (to Baillie's great delight) ; [3] and although in Goodwin's case the alleged reason for dismissal was the curious one that he would not allow his people to come to the Lord's Supper unless they were really Christian in their walk and conversation, the true reason, even without Baillie's *naïve* remark, would be easy to surmise.

[1] *Sufferings of the Clergy*, i. 107.

[2] *Reliquiæ Baxterianæ*, i. 74. Baxter is speaking of the whole time during which religious affairs were unsettled, from the meeting of the Long Parliament to the period of Cromwell's " Triers."

[3] *Letters and Journals* (ed. Bannatyne Club), ii. 299 : " Blessed be God, all the ministers of London are for us. Burton and Goodwin, the only two that were Independent, are by the Parliament removed from their places."

It may be said, of course, that in the case of men like these, expulsion (leaving out of account the reason given for it) was the only consistent course for the authorities to take ; and indeed this would apply to the royalist and Episcopalian clergymen as well.   But however justifiable from the Parliamentary or Presbyterian point of view the procedure might be—and whether it were for actual misdoing or for political or theological opposition that parish ministers were deprived—in the result the number of dismissals must have been by no means small.   Private grudges and enmities, also, found their opportunity in these conditions, as is shown in cases whereof the record remains.[1]   Moreover, in the general confusion which must have prevailed while the Westminster Assembly was disputing with the Independents, wrangling with the Parliament, and generally endeavouring to knead its material into the desired contours and curves, to make parishes vacant was a much easier business than to fill them up again.   Ministers of sufficiently strong Presbyterian leanings, or of sufficiently pliable temperament to take office while holding their opinions in suspense until Assembly and Parliament should formulate the infallible truth for them, were not in all cases to be had for the asking.   And when the establishment of the Presbyterian system came to be taken in hand, the absence of such local organising and directing force as the resident clergyman would naturally be expected to supply would, beyond all doubt, tell unfavourably upon the pace at which a settlement was reached. That the previous expulsions had something to do with the comparative failure of Presbyterianism to get a tight grip upon the country generally is a fair inference from the fact that in London—where vacancies would be more swiftly filled—the Presbyterian settling down was far more complete. But in any case the fact remains.   Over large tracts of England the desired settlement never crystallised at all, never got beyond the theoretical stage.   Programmes were drawn up, but the performance never took place as billed. And although time might have enabled the practical embodiment of the Presbyterian system to catch up with the

[1] For an instance, see *The Life and Times of Martin Blake*, by J. F. Chanter, chap. iv.

theoretical formulation of it which had gone on so far ahead, time was the one thing that was denied.

For the army, largely made up of Independents, was naturally disinclined to surrender one of the most essential elements of the freedom it had fought to win : it could have no feeling but one of anger and disappointment as it saw how poor a treasure Parliament was purchasing with the blood that had been freely shed ; and the quarrel between the Parliament and the soldiers moved rapidly to a head. It is to political history that the recital of many of the subsequent events properly belongs. The broad outline, however, may be sketched with sufficient clearness at any rate to show how the difference between Independents and Presbyterians had now become the central pivot of affairs. We have seen how Charles had delivered himself into the power of the Scotch army, how the subsequent negotiations broke down, and how the danger of seeing the Scotch forces arrayed against, instead of for, the English cause thereupon temporarily passed away. But the cloud soon appeared upon the horizon once more. For on the failure of the negotiations, the Scotch transferred Charles to the Parliament's hands ; and the Parliament, in its dread of the Independent army, inclined more and more towards an accommodation with the King. Under the constraint of fear as to what such an accommodation would mean, the army was compelled to take strong measures in its turn. It seized the King at Holmby House and bore him away, with no purpose of harming him, but simply with the purpose of obtaining a fair settlement on its own and the nation's behalf.[1] Negotiations between Cromwell and Ireton on the one side and the King on the other seemed to promise well : then Charles, who had in fact been insincere throughout, made his escape —foolishly, however, seeking a refuge at Carisbrooke Castle, in the Isle of Wight,[2] whose Governor turned out to be a foe instead of, as the King had fondly hoped, a friend. But, prisoner as he still was, Charles found opportunities of

[1] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, IV. i. 510-517. As to the extent of Cromwell's responsibility for the removal of the King, and the instructions he probably gave to Joyce, who was in charge of the military party, see the discussion in *Clarke Papers* (ed. Firth), i. xxvi-xxxi.

[2] Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, IV. ii. 871-874.

communicating with Parliament ; and his promise to support
the Presbyterian settlement (a promise in all probability as
insincerely made as his earlier promises had been) enlisted
the sympathies of the parliamentary majority on his behalf,
while it moved the Scotch to raise a new army for the
purpose of fighting under the royalist flag.[1]   Then, striking
while the iron was hot, Parliament passed an enactment
which marks the climax of Presbyterian intolerance, an
enactment appointing death as the penalty for denying the
Trinity, the Deity of Christ, the Inspiration of Scripture, or
the Resurrection, and awarding imprisonment for various
minor heresies or for calling Presbyterian Church government
anti-Christian or unlawful.[2]   But Parliament had too pre-
sumptuously reckoned on having the game in its hands.   Its
" check " speedily brought a " checkmate " from the other
side.   The courage of Cromwell rose to the occasion's
demand : the Scotch army was scattered at Preston, and the
Royalist risings which its entrance into England had here
and there provoked were beaten down :[3] the King was once
again captured by the anti-Parliament troops ; and then the
Parliament had to pay.   In December of 1648 Colonel
Pride, acting under the instruction of the Council of Officers,
cleared the Presbyterian majority — now the Royalist
majority—from the House of Commons, and the minority of
Independent members were masters of the parliamentary
field, as the Independent soldiers were masters of the field of
war.[4]   It was not much more than two years after the Act
for the establishment of Presbyterianism had been passed
that the Parliament which had passed it lost its power.

Thus Presbyterianism's movement of decline began.
That, having begun, it was not sooner consummated, seems
at first to be matter for surprise.   Not till April of
1653 did Independency fully take the reins into its own
hands ; and even then it did so, not through the Parliament
at all, but through Cromwell's single strength.   One might
well have expected that those members who were left after

[1] Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, iv. 114.
[2] Scobell, *Collection of Acts and Ordinances, etc.*, i. 149, 150.
[3] Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, iv. chaps. 62-65.
[4] Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), ii. 468-471 ;
Lingard, *History of England* (ed. 1855), viii. 109.

Pride's Purge—the "Rump" as they came to be called [1]—
would at once have proceeded to a definite settlement of the
country's disordered affairs, and would at any rate have
made an attempt at something like a final dealing with that
religious problem which had for so many years been
clamouring ever more and more loudly, and which now
seemed as if it were determined to block every road to
national quietude until its own claims were met. But the
Rump accomplished little. The King, indeed, was sent to
his doom ; but in that tremendous explosion of wrathful
force, heard across all the world, it was as though all the
power of the Parliament had been discharged. Afterwards,
something like paralysis set in. The Commons, with all
men looking towards them and expecting them to give a
new impulse to affairs, merely as it were walked round the
questions by which they were confronted—sat round them
would perhaps be a more accurate description—and, with an
occasional idle fingering at them, or an occasional tilting of
them from which they at once settled back to their original
position again, were content. The number of Independent
congregations continued to grow with sure, if comparatively
slow, advance.[2] But the House which was known to be in
sympathy with the Independents in the army and in the
country did little to translate its sympathy into anything
positive or constructive, and the expectant public waited
in vain.

Perhaps, however, the inertness of the Rump is after all
not so difficult to understand. To touch the great question
of the time was like putting a match to materials which
might easily prove to be combustible, if not explosive. The
principle of toleration being admitted, the limits within which
it was to be permitted still remained to be defined ; and
even if the proviso repeatedly urged by even the most
advanced of the Independents—that tolerated bodies must
be such as threatened no danger to the safety of the State—
even if this were adopted, there was the ultimate task of

[1] The name really dates from a parliamentary debate in Richard Cromwell's
time, but may conveniently come into use at once.
[2] For instance, Hare Court, Canonbury, London (Congregational, 1648) and
Old King Street, Bristol (Baptist, 1650). For these and others see *Congregational
Year Book* and *Baptist Year Book*.

deciding which bodies were, and which were not, of a dangerous class. To us, with our long experience of toleration, the problem is one which solves itself in practice speedily enough. But it was not so easy for men in the seventeenth century to understand this. And even if they had understood, to rule out some quasi-religious sects from benefits given to others was likely to raise a storm. When it came to the drafting of practical measures, there were Fifth-Monarchy men, Levellers, and others to be reckoned with ; and one can well comprehend a fear lest the opening of the door should let in a riotous and destructive mob. That sense of new possibilities which 1640 had kindled had not been felt by sane and moderate reformers alone : at any rate it had passed into many other breasts since then. And the general unsettlement of the times had caused not a few sects and parties to become loudly vocal. Startling ideas in government and religion had been fermenting for long. The republican idea could hardly be called new; for so far back as 1641—before the quarrel between Charles and his people had come anywhere near its climax—the Speaker had reproved a member of the Long Parliament for hinting at the possible deposition and punishment of Kings.[1] A recent writer reminds us that " in 1644 some forward members were asking the Venetian Ambassador for a model of his famous Republic. The idea of a Commonwealth was freely sown throughout the land before Naseby crushed the last army of King Charles." [2] But though the idea of republicanism had passed beyond the theoretical stage, and must have lost any terror which as a theoretical idea it had once possessed, the consciousness that the recent adoption of it was the making of a great experiment on the political side of things, and the conjuring up of spirits who might not prove altogether submissive, must have been present to the Parliament's mind, and rung the caution-bell in its ears. There were other factors in the general situation that were more directly threatening. Fifth-Monarchy men were of various kinds.[3] They had in common the general idea of a return

[1] Gooch, *History of English Democratic Ideas in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 104.

[2] H. A. L. Fisher, *The Republican Tradition in Europe*, p. 40.

[3] For a brief summary, see Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), ii. 59, 60.

of Christ to earth to reign, and to establish the " fifth
monarchy " in succession to the four great monarchies—
Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, Roman—of ancient times. But
the practical programme resulting from the adoption of the
general idea varied greatly. Some members of the sect
were simply visionaries, content to wait in quietness until
Christ should come. Others, like the petitioners of the
eastern counties, wished that arrangements should immediately
be made whereby only the godly should choose rulers and
parliaments.[1] Yet others were ready to establish this system
by force of arms, and were consequently a real danger to the
stability of the State. The idea of toleration for even
orthodox religious bodies might well pass under a cloud
when it was known that some of their members, like John
Canne, adopted in some form or other the Fifth-Monarchy
doctrines.[2] Then there were the " Levellers," with Lilburne
for their leader, who argued that sovereignty resided in the
nation at large, that a parliament as ordinarily constituted
was subversive of liberty,[3] and who (in the *Agreement of
the People*, drawn up in 1649) asked that election should
be by manhood suffrage, that no one should sit in two
successive parliaments, and that parliament should exercise
scarcely more than strictly limited administrative and police
powers.[4] Again, in the very year of the King's execution
the " Diggers " seized upon some plots of ground in Surrey,
avowing communistic theories and protesting against private
property in land.[5] Socinianism was showing its head once
again ; and hardly any one had as yet gone past the stage
of looking upon Socinianism as a social and political danger.
John Biddle, who had been imprisoned under the Act of

[1] Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate*, i. 32, 33.

[2] Wilson, *History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches in London*,
iv. 133-135.

[3] Consult Lilburne's *England's Birthright justified against arbitrary
usurpations, royal or parliamentary, or under what visor soever.*

[4] Gooch, *History of English Democratic Ideas in the Seventeenth Century*,
p. 202. The *Agreement* is sometimes spoken of as if it were put forward by the
Independents. So, for instance, Professor Andrews in *Christ and Civilisation*
(essays by various writers, ed. Paton, Bunting, and Garvie), p. 365. Its
promulgators happened to be Independents, but it was not as Independents that
they issued it.

[5] *Clarke Papers* (ed. Firth), ii. 209, 210 ; Whitelock, *Memorials of the
English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), iii. 17.

1648 spoken of above (he maintained what were usually termed Socinian opinions, together with some curious additions of his own, such as that God occupied a certain amount of "space") but had been released in 1651, set up a conventicle in London.[1] On every side there was an emergence of new ideas, or the revivifying of old ones, some of them harmless, some of them harmless but then supposed to be harmful, some of them really harmful, and some of them destructive of society from its base to its corner-stone. When to all this was added the fact that the death of the King had produced a not inconsiderable royalist reaction,[2] the Rump might well feel that it was better to move warily —might, indeed, well be afraid to move at all.   One's first surprise at its inactivity and ineffectualness dies down at a closer inspection of the ground on which it stood.

And Cromwell, the true master-spirit, was as yet unprepared to play that part of autocrat which he had at last to undertake.   He had other work on his hands in the suppression of the Irish rebellion and in the conquering of the Scotch army which, after the death of Charles, espoused the cause of Charles's son.   But, even after Worcester, Cromwell still clung to the hope that Parliament would accept its mission and perform its appointed work ; and his strength was put into an effort to rouse it rather than into any endeavour at making himself the arbiter of his country's fate.   What it was that Cromwell wanted and expected the Parliament to effect (it was not very much, no final settlement of affairs, but only a preparation for it and a smoothing of the way) we shall soon see.   The immediate point is that not by himself, but by Parliament, were the ensuing procedures to be taken.   To follow Cromwell through the various stages which brought him to his final high place is an interesting study—and a study which, once carried through, makes it impossible to believe that personal ambition was the spring which moved him. If in the end he became the autocrat, it was because this

[1] Toulmin, *A Review of the Life, Character and Writings of Rev. John Biddle*, p. 78.

[2] "Probably not more than a third part of the nation were sincere adherents to the commonwealthsmen and the Independents. The other two-thirds consisted of royalists and Presbyterians." Godwin, *History of the Commonwealth*, iii. 116.

greatness was thrust upon him. From long before, certainly, he had felt himself "called." There was a divine will working itself out, a divine influence striving with England ; and one of its instruments he knew himself to be. But he had been content to fling himself, as one among many, upon the tide of that influence. That his life was destined, not so much to float upon the tide as actually to form the narrow banks through which the whole of it swept, was a conviction which at this time had not dawned upon his mind, tenaciously as he clung to it when once it had arrived. And so the country was left for its rescue out of the horrible pit and the miry clay and the setting of its feet upon a rock, with a remnant of a Parliament shrinkingly facing—or alternately facing and sheering off from—a task which it knew to be too great for its powers.

Such religious and ecclesiastical legislation as the Parliament ventured upon was of the indecisive character which under the circumstances we might expect. The religious situation was really chaotic. Nominally, the Presbyterian settlement remained operative ; but it had of course less chance than ever of becoming effective. Even the Westminster Assembly—that seemingly inexhaustible storehouse of inspiration—expired without any formal command or decision to dissolve.[1] The Rump, while having no love for the Presbyterian settlement as enacted, provided nothing to put in its place. There was not much hesitation as to carrying further that destruction of the Church of England and that sequestration of its property which had been begun in 1646 ; and by an act of 1649 the offices and lands of Deans and Chapters were disposed of as the offices and lands of Bishops had been by the earlier Bill.[2] But on the constructive side nothing much was done. New enactments were promulgated for the due observance of the Sabbath day and for the regulation of private habits and morals.[3] But this was merely marking time, and left the crux of the religious problem quite untouched. On the vital question of toleration Parliament blew hot and cold.

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[1] Hetherington, *History of The Westminster Assembly* (4th ed.), p. 310.
[2] Scobell, *Collection of Acts and Ordinances, etc.*, ii. 16-30.
[3] *Ibid.* ii. 119, 121, 123.

An Act of September 1650 professed to repeal the old Acts of Uniformity,[1] but the same Act provided that every person must attend at some form of religious service on the Sunday and on days of public feasts and fasts; and before this Parliament had sought to allay the fears which it knew existed in some quarters by a declaration that the institution of a universal toleration was not for a moment in its thought.[2] All this, of course, only went to prove that the Rump was looking vaguely round the compass for a guiding star, and knew not where to let its gaze come to rest. A possible way out of the difficulty — though the supine Parliament tarried so long that the gate swung to across it again—was suggested in a petition, presented by various Independent ministers in February 1652, termed a *Petition for the Propagation of the Gospel*.[3] Despite its Independent origin, it was in the Presbyterian direction that the document looked ; for there were to be Committees of ministers and others for the testing of those who desired to preach, attendance at worship was to be compulsory, a " roving Commission " was to be appointed by Parliament for the supervision of ecclesiastical affairs, and open speaking against Christian fundamentals was to be dealt with as an offence.   The whole scheme had the State control of religion as its basal idea.   But the Presbyterianism towards which the document looked was of a tempered sort ; for those who wished to worship in places other than the parish Church were to be permitted to do so on giving information to the magistrate, while participation in the Sacraments was not to be compelled.   That the Independents should have been ready to accept such a scheme—that even John Goodwin, the prophet of widest toleration, should have appended his name—is certainly evidence of Independent willingness to surrender a good deal.   Even over this project, however, the Rump dallied ; and only a fraction of it had been approved when in April of 1653 the shaky fabric of the House of Commons came tumbling to the ground.

For by that time Cromwell's patience was exhausted.

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[1] Scobell, *Collection of Acts and Ordinances, etc.*, ii. 131.

[2] Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate*, i. 193.

[3] The details of the plan are in Masson's *Life of Milton*, iv. 391, 392.

On the political side the confusion and vacillation were as marked as on the religious ; and not in this way, Cromwell had come to see, could so critical a situation be set right. His idea, in fact, ever since Pride's " purging " of the Commons, had been that the remnant should simply attend to such matters as called for immediate action, should take fit measures for the assembling of its successor, and should then dissolve. But as time passed on the House, incompetent as it was, seemed more and more determined to sit fast. It had no shame in lagging superfluous on the stage. The reason may have lain partly in love of power and in reluctance to give up the exceptional position in which circumstances had placed it—but lay more probably in that uncertainty, before noticed, as to what might happen if it moved. In the end, when the House came to formulate the plan for the summoning of a new representative Assembly, it was provided that the existing members were to retain their seats, and were to sit in judgment upon any new members whom the constituencies might return, rejecting them if so minded, while upon possible royalist members no ban was set.[1] This meant, or might easily mean, the undoing of all for which Cromwell had striven ; and only by an act of violence, Cromwell perceived, could the outbreak of greater violence be restrained. Now his course was clear. Some who had companied with him were dropping away : even Sir Harry Vane had sided with the Parliament in its endeavour to keep power in its own hands : [2] Cromwell must step to the front alone. Through the narrow channel of his personality, now, was the tide of things to find its way to the goal. Self-surrender, then, meant self-assertion in the eyes of men. Unwilling as he might be (" I have sought the Lord night and day, that He would rather slay me than put me upon the doing of this work "[3]) the task must be shouldered. On April 20 he went down to the House, listened for awhile to the debate, then called in some soldiers whom he had posted in reserve, and, heedless of the outbursts of angry reproach levelled at him

[1] Masson, *Life of Milton*, iv. 406 ff.
[2] Vane was an ardent republican, and was apparently ready to do anything to hinder the personal ascendancy of Cromwell.
[3] Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas), ii. 265.

by Vane and others, put an end to the Rump Parliament by
driving its members from the doors.[1]   And so the sceptre of
authority passed into the only hands in England that could
hold it high.

The expulsion of the Rump, of course, meant for
Presbyterianism that final end which had been foreshadowed
by Pride's Purge.   Now a really new order was to be ushered
in.   The hour of Independency's triumph had arrived, and
it was under Independent inspiration, as residing in and
flowing from Cromwell, that the destinies of the country
were for the next few years to be controlled.   The
Independent ascendancy was certainly, as we shall see, a
very different thing from the Presbyterian ascendancy which
had preceded it.   Yet it has to be admitted that in the
very winning of its victory Independency became less true
to the Nonconformist spirit than it had been before ; and
though it may be useless to quarrel with the fate which had
seemed to make the deterioration inevitable, impartial history
must at least note the fact.   For a long time past, as we
have seen, the problem of politics and of religion had been
becoming more and more intertwined ; and it had been with
the interests of religion (in its Presbyterian variety) directly
in view that politics had been controlled during the approach
to and the continuance of the Presbyterian ascendancy.
But this had meant that Independency must, in order to
secure its religious rights, attack the political system as well
as the religious, since the two were in fact one and the same
—and it meant, also, that in winning a religious victory
Independency must, in spite of itself, win a political triumph
as well.   Its champion found himself in the hour of his
success charged with the re-construction of the entire State.
It was only natural, therefore, however regrettable, that
Independency should voluntarily maintain the political
association into which it had previously been forced, that it
should seek—or at least be willing to receive—gifts from
the man with whom its cause had been identified so closely,
and that this man, in his turn, should be inclined to con-
struct his State system largely round the Independent idea.
These things (it may as well be said at once lest, leaving

[1] Whitelock, *Memorials of the English Affairs*, etc. (ed. 1853), iv. 5, 6.

Independency victorious at this section's close, we should hope for too much) did actually take place. But that they involve a departure from the conception of Independency as a religious organisation resulting from the action of an inner religious life and reacting upon that inner religious life again—that they involve the introduction of irrelevant and even antagonistic elements—needs no proof. And to say these things is to say that Independency, through its very success under the man who championed it, slipped away to some extent from the grasp of the Nonconformist spirit and the inspiration of the Nonconformist ideal. And the more the man of to-day realises what the Nonconformist spirit and the Nonconformist ideal are—the more he understands how great is the need for their pure witness in the world—so much the more, though he may excuse, will he be moved to regret.

SECTION 2

The Rise of the Quakers

AUTHORITIES.—The story of the beginnings of Quakerism (within the limits of this section) is, in effect, the story of the personal experience of George Fox. It is, therefore, in Fox's own *Journal* that the chief source of information is to be found. There is no really satisfactory history of Quakerism as a whole, but Sewel's *History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian people called Quakers* may be consulted for a brief account of Fox's early inner experience. Kroese's *History of the Quakers* deals with the matter from a hostile standpoint. Barclay's *Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* is valuable as a general survey of the conditions when the Quaker movement began. Mr. Edmund Harvey's little book on *The Rise of the Quakers*, in the *Eras of Nonconformity* series, gives a short, but vivid and very useful, narration of Fox's conversion and ministry.

But even while the witness of the Nonconformist spirit, as given through Independency, was losing its clear sharpness, from another quarter that witness was rising in new power. Indeed, from the beginning of that wrestle between Presbyterianism and Independency which, after Presbyterianism's definite ascendancy started in 1643, grew so swiftly acute—that wrestle from which Independency came forth victorious indeed, but wounded and with something of the mist and bewilderment of battle hanging still across its eyes—from the beginning of it the movement known as

Quakerism was unfolding its wings. It is not without
interest to note that 1643, the year of the Westminster
Assembly's Meeting, was the year in which spiritual unrest
commenced to vex George Fox's soul—that 1646, the year
of the edict for the establishment of Presbyterianism, was
the year in which George Fox found peace returning—and
that 1653, the year of Independency's winning of supreme
power in the person of Oliver Cromwell, was the year in
which the first great Quaker missionary work, the first great
Quaker expansion, made its start.   Quakerism, in short,
was a new protest of the Nonconformist spirit, breaking
upon the world when those to whom the making of that
protest had before been entrusted fell short of entire faith-
fulness to their charge.

Even by sympathetic historians and writers this has not
always, or for that matter often, been discerned.   The time
when it was possible to level mere abuse against or pour
mere contempt upon Quakerism has indeed long since gone
by.   The right of the Quakers to an honourable place
among Christian bodies is conceded perforce ; for nobility,
even saintliness, of character, fruitfulness in good works,
earnestness in every noble private and public cause, have
made it impossible for any one to deny that right without
exposing himself to the charge of being under a strong
delusion or of wilfully believing a lie.   Yet it cannot be
said that every trace of condescension has vanished from
the attitude taken up towards the Quakers by members of
other Churches.   The early Friends are not infrequently
spoken of in a graciously condescending manner which
seems to mean that, spite of their peculiarities, they were
not so very far wrong after all.   The suggestion sometimes
appears to be that they are really to be pitied rather than
blamed.   Or they are apologised for as those who mistook
a not so very base metal for gold rather than commended
as those who really found a pearl of great price.   A true
appreciation of what the Nonconformist spirit is must lead
to an estimate of the Quakers very different from, and far
warmer than, this.   Their witness to the Nonconformist
spirit did indeed—as human witness to any eternal principle
almost invariably does—include faulty elements from the

outset, and did become in some respects faultier, more halting, more streaked with alloy, as time went on. But an examination of the position taken up by George Fox and his followers, an examination made in view of the requirements of the genuine Nonconformist ideal, must lead up to this verdict—that in that position we find the clearest testimony to the Nonconformist spirit and ideal which our history affords since John Wiclif promulgated his doctrines of " Dominion " centuries before. For the facts are so.

To tell the story of the rise of Quakerism is to tell the story of the personal experience of George Fox ; for if ever a movement was founded by one man alone, the Quaker movement was. Attempts have been made to allot it to other sources. One endeavour has been made by way of proving that the distinctive Quaker tenets proceeded from some of the Baptists ;[1] and one writer has claimed that the true founder of Quakerism was Gerrard Winstanley,[2] the leader of the " Diggers " on St. George's Hill, in Surrey.[3] Neither contention, however, can really be made good. In regard to the first essay, all that can be shown is that some of the Baptists (as for that matter not a few members of every Church) were possessed of a profound and keen spiritual aspiration—and Fox's ideas reached much further than this. It was, as we shall see, the direct, unmediated presence of the divine life in man on which his emphasis was laid. In regard to the second, it is quite clear that what Gerrard Winstanley proclaimed was a philosophy rather than a religion—that the " Divine Light " of which he spoke was really Reason—that his concern, therefore, was not so much with a spiritual experience which was to be sought for as with a natural condition already existing—and that, according to Winstanley, man's true spiritual achievement accordingly consisted in letting the divineness with which he was born assert itself and have its way.[4] And Winstanley's philosophic doctrine has no point of attachment with historic Christianity at all. All this is far enough from the teaching

[1] *Fox, Friends, and Early Baptists*, by W. Tallack.

[2] *The Digger Movement in the Days of the Commonwealth*, by Lewis H. Berens, p. 51.

[3] *Supra*, p. 353.

[4] See the exposition in Beren's book, as former note, pp. 52-67.

of Fox; nor does the fact that Quakerism was sometimes fathered on Winstanley by opponents,[1] whom a certain similarity of occasional phrasing misled, prove any real derivation to have taken place. The effort to show that Quakerism was a kind of natural development from the position of the "Seekers" is no more successful.[2] It is undisputed that up and down the country there were groups of men and women who, under the badge of "Seekers," proclaimed their discontent with religion as England taught and practised it. But in most of these a tendency to fanaticism is the most strongly-marked feature. The "Seekers" were the forerunners of the "Ranters," whom Fox and the Quakers always strenuously opposed, rather than of the Quakers themselves. Some of the more moderate and spiritually-minded among the "Seekers" may certainly have found in Quakerism that which they desired; but only in this way—not at all through any development out of what the "Seekers" were or thought or did—can any relation between the latter and Quakerism have come into being. Indeed, we may say of Quakerism as we said of Wicliffism, that it made a sudden and dramatic appearance upon the stage. It was veritably something new. It was from Fox, and from nowhere else, that the Quaker stream flowed forth.

From early days he had hungered and thirsted after righteousness. Yet, though brought up in a pious and godly home, he found no spiritual content. By 1643—he was then nineteen years of age—the crisis had come; and it came, as has often happened with souls marked out for a special apostleship, with the suddenness of a blinding lightning-flash. Challenged by a cousin and a friend to continued drinking at a fair, and reminded in friendly but blustering style that he who would not drink must pay for all, Fox was struck with the inconsistency between profession and practice implied in the whole thing (for his companions were men of religious profession) and withdrew.[3] From this comparatively

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[1] For instance by Coomber, as quoted by Berens in *The Digger Movement in The Days of The Commonwealth*, pp. 49, 50.

[2] See on the "Seekers," Barclay's *Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth*, pp. 173-179, and chapter 17.

[3] Fox's *Journal* (ed. 1901), i. 3; Sewel, *History of the Quakers*, i. 14.

small beginning large consequences came. The inward unrest, once grown acute, would not die down ; and for three years Fox wandered (it is worth notice that in September 1643 he stayed for some time at Lutterworth, hallowed with memories of Wiclif's name), seeking help, and seeking it vainly, from ministers here and there, and driven more and more to feel that religion, for Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Independents alike, was only the mere shadow of what it ought to be.[1] Clearly enough, it was for something more than a religious system which his mind might accept as correct, and which, once accepted, might suggest or even energise some moral improvement in him, that he was longing. That was what religion, even at its utmost, meant for nearly all. But Fox was longing for more—for the experience of an inner life-process which should be identified with himself and remake him through and through. Then, as he walked toward Coventry in 1646,[2] there began that consciousness of religion as a veritable streaming through the human personality of life from the divine source of life, which came to be the central thing in Fox's message and Fox's own religious career. That to be a true believer was to be " born of God " was burnt into his mind among the first impressions of his new illumination ; and perhaps if we say that Fox henceforward took that phrase literally, or as nearly literally as it can be taken, not metaphorically as the majority of Christian bodies have always taken it and for that matter take it still, we shall be at the heart of his thought. Or rather, we shall be at the heart of his experience ; for a man's experience is one thing and his account of it another ; and Fox's account of his experience sometimes grew tangled. Yet of being " born of God," and in many equivalent phrases, he consistently and persistently spoke. In the nature of the case, not much more than the mere assertion can here be made. The evidence lies in sentence after sentence, spiritual record after spiritual record, scattered through Fox's own writings ; and only by a careful reading of these can the soundness of the assertion be proved. But such a reading leaves no doubt. Fox's teaching con-

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[1] Sewel, *History of the Quakers*, i. 14-18.
[2] *Ibid.* i. 18. Fox's *Journal* (ed. 1901), i. 7.

cerning a spiritual perfection which lay within the reach of
every true Christian shows how he conceived the true
religious experience—as a divine life superinduced upon and
supplanting the life originally possessed.   " Ye live all in
the Seed, which is one, which keeps atop of the head of the
serpent, and keeps his head down, and bringeth it under. . . .
Then ye come to be bone of His bone and flesh of His
flesh . . . whereby ye may come to be inheritors in the
Lord's strength. . . . So the seed of the serpent being kept
down with the Seed, which is Christ, in the individual, He
brings to see over all that is contrary." [1]   What had happened
to Fox had been the advent of a genuine mystical experience :
instead of reposing himself upon reasonings or conclusions
about God, he had made a real affiliation—if the clumsy
phrase may pass—of his spirit to God's living spirit as
offered (not merely revealed) in a still-living Christ ; and the
one and only function left to his own personality was to
throw itself upon, and sink itself in, the tides of a life not its
own.   This was Christianity as Fox now conceived it.   It
was not that he despised the Bible, or those historic facts of
Christ's life and death which it contained, as if they did not
count—though the charge of doing so was frequently made ;
but he took the Bible as witnessing to a living spiritual
presence which was real as ever after the Bible-age had
closed and to the end of the world ; and he held that the
best use of the Bible was made when a man passed beyond
the Bible itself to the changeless life and power of which it
spoke.   The very charge brought against Fox at Lancaster
in 1652—the charge of having made himself equal with
God [2]—is a charge which might easily suggest itself to those
who could not comprehend the mystical experience on which
Fox insisted, and really stands as a witness to the kind of
spiritual experience which Fox claimed ; while his reply to
the charge—that he had intended no claim of being per-
sonally equal with God, but had only meant to emphasise
the Scripture doctrine that He that sanctifieth and they that
are sanctified are all of one, one in the Father and in the

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[1] Fox's *Journals and Epistles* (ed. 1694), ii. 82.

[2] See on this, *Spiritual Guidance in Quaker Experience*, by W. C. Braith-
waite, p. 37.

Son [1]—points the same way. Fox, in fact, practically lived
out—and insisted on the living out as being the very essence
of Christianity—that theory of the Headship of Christ which
the Independents had from the beginning of Independency
professed, but which they had only partially exemplified :
in his mysticism he went back to the position which Wiclif
had occupied in his proclamation of the great doctrine of
" Dominion " and of " holding all things from God " ; and
he was, therefore, since he started all spiritual processes from
that identification with the divine life in which the Noncon-
formist spirit and ideal declare all spiritual processes ought
to start, the greatest embodiment of the Nonconformist
spirit and ideal since Wiclif's day.

Naturally the question arises, Why, if this be so, did not
the Quaker witness prove more powerful ? Why, as a mere
matter of quantity and bulk among the elements of historic
Nonconformity, does not Quakerism make a greater display ?
As we come presently to some of the places at which the
Quaker testimony dropped from its first high key, at which
it permitted dimness to come upon and cloud its gold, we
shall find the reply. For the moment, one or two things
may be set down. It must be remembered that Fox,
though a man of finest spiritual quality, was not a thinker
in the strict sense ; and while his spiritual experience was
of the loftiest order, his interpretation and account of that
experience was not always exact. He failed to formulate
definitely, or at any rate completely, the principle which was
seeking for a channel of expression and realisation through
him. He comprehended it to this extent—that here within
him was life, a new life breaking in upon him from the
eternal source of life. But, while seeing that in this life,
and not in any organisation, lay the true spiritual starting-
point, he did not see that this life, though refusing to be
made by organisation, needed to *make* an organisation for
itself—an organisation which should react upon, and so
help, life in its turn. His experience brought him to a
contradiction of the conventional religious programme
followed by the majority of those surrounding him, whereas

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[1] See on this, *Spiritual Guidance in Quaker Experience*, by W. C. Braith-
waite, p. 37.

what his experience ought to have brought him to was not
so much a contradiction of the programme as a simple
reversal of its items—in which reversal, however, both items
should have been preserved. In the result, this told upon
Quaker life and Quaker witness, not so much for Fox
himself (though to some extent it did so even for him) as
for some of those who followed his call and took his way.
For one thing, organisation had to come, as it always must
come to any body of men animated by a common idea or a
common experience, if the idea is to be fruitful and the
experience is to perpetuate, develop, and intensify itself;
and, not having been permitted to come as the natural
outcome of the inner experience, its advent not having been
looked for from the vantage ground of that inner experience
and welcomed as it came, but coming as it were under the
pressure of emergency, its relation with and its adjustment
to the inner life and experience went awry in this case as,
for other reasons, it had gone awry in many cases before.
But the chief flaw lay in the fact that the new inner experi-
ence came to be looked upon too much in the light of a mere
contradiction of the conventional religious programme of the
day. It would be absurd to suggest that in Fox's own case
there was anything less than an experience which positively
affected the entire moral and spiritual constitution of the
man. However far in his account of his experience he may
have represented it as antagonistic to the conventional one,
and so have given it a negative colour (and he never did
this to the exclusion of definite affirmations about it) the
experience itself was a real life-movement and had a very
positive content. But with some others—it was perfectly
natural that subsequent disciples should base themselves
upon Fox's *account* of his experience rather than imitate him
by flinging themselves, as he had done, upon the tides of
creative spiritual life—things tended in the negative direction
as time went on. The conception of the " inner light "—one
of the phrases in which Fox frequently expressed the new
possession of his soul [1]—was too apt to be taken as if it
had reference simply to a method of knowledge concerning
spiritual things by which the method of intellectual processes

[1] Fox's *Journal* (ed. 1901), i. 12, 34, etc.

was to be superseded. This has, in fact, been one of the errors of mysticism down the ages. The inner experience of a new life necessarily results in new knowledge about that life—then the whole experience is announced and explained as being a new method of knowledge, whereas it is in reality very much more—so the emphasis of the mystical doctrine gets shifted, and the mysticism which might have saved the world for a really divine experience spends itself on what is only a side-issue after all. For Fox, the "inner light" always meant the "inner life"; but some of his followers did not escape the snare of interpreting the phrase in the narrower sense, and thus turning themselves into little else than protesters against the methods whereby people in general arrived at intellectual convictions concerning the religious truth. That knowledge *about* God could be more surely obtained through the "inner light" than through a written word or the Church's interpretations of it —that these latter, so far as knowledge *about* God was concerned, might conceivably do more harm than good— came often to be the contention; whereas with Fox the matter had only secondarily been one of knowledge *about* God, and had primarily been one of the possession by man of God and by God of man, one of the interpenetrations of the human life by the divine. Also the negative and protesting attitude, once assumed, easily loses its balance; and it must be remembered that the mistakes and excesses into which some of the Quakers fell (the reference is to those of which genuine adherents of the movement must be held guilty, not to those committed by the unauthorised hangers-on which every movement finds fastened to its skirts) were due, not to essential Quakerism, but to the too negative and protesting character which Quakerism sometimes assumed. A spiritual individualism, such as that which underlay the whole thing, is particularly liable to that sort of error unless the lines of its energising be carefully mapped out. Had Fox formulated definitely and completely the principle which was seeking for a channel of expression and realisation through him, the movement he initiated might have kept all its first sweet savour, and perhaps no enemy would have found his chance of sowing

tares among the wheat.   But we have to take things as
they are.

In much of this, however, the look reaches considerably
ahead.   It was only necessary to set down these considera-
tions because, if Quakerism is declared to have been, in its
original essence, the finest expression of the Nonconformist
spirit since Wiclif's day, the question as to why the main
waters of Nonconformist history have not run along a Quaker
river-bed and between Quaker banks is bound to arise.   We
turn back to note the principal facts in the Quaker story up
to the beginning of Cromwell's supremacy in 1653.

The recital need not be long.   For when it has been
said that Fox went up and down many of the northern
and midland counties, preaching his doctrine that the Christ
whom men and women were to know was a Christ within
and not merely a Christ without, winning converts in
numbers but at the same time rousing frenzied opposition
in not a few, suffering indignity, assault and imprisonment
for the sake of what he held to be the truth, the entire story
has been summarised.   Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire
saw the beginning of his ministry ; and such phrases as this
one of the historian—"they were reached very eminently in
their minds by an invisible power"[1]—or similar phrases in
Fox's *Journal* really stand for a large and swift extension
of Quaker ideas.   We see Fox at Eaton in Derbyshire, at
a meeting in connection with which he uses for the first
time the title of "Friends."[2]   Mansfield, Market Bosworth,
Coventry, and many other places, appear on his itinerary.
He finds a welcome for himself and his teaching at the first-
named place in a "company of Separatists, who had formerly
been Baptists,"[3] and who "began to call themselves 'children
of light'"—a frequent name for the early Quakers, though
not an original one, as some continental Baptists had used it
before.[4]   Sometimes a sympathiser was found in unexpected
places and in unlikely men, as in the Captain Purfloe who
told Fox that "he had known that principle above ten

[1] Sewel, *History of the Quakers*, i. 39.
[2] Fox's *Journal* (ed. 1901), i. 27.
[3] Quoted from MS. at Devonshire House, by William C. Braithwaite in
Spiritual Guidance in Quaker Experience, p. 30.
[4] Barclay, *Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth*, pp.
262 note, 273 note.

years, and was glad that the Lord did publish it abroad among the people."[1] Something of his spirit came upon others, so that little by little a band of preachers was formed—at least one woman, Elizabeth Hooton, being among them[2]—by whom the "light" was spread far and wide. The names of Thomas Aldam, Richard Farnsworth, and Francis Howgill,[3] stand with others high on the list —the last being worthy of note in that he had been "immediately convinced," that is, not through the instrumentality of Fox or any other, but like Fox himself, by an independent experience within his own soul.[4] At last the historian is able to say that by 1652 "the Quakers, so called, by a firm and lasting patience, have surmounted the greatest difficulties, and are at length become a numerous people, many not valuing their own lives, when they met with opportunity, for the service of God."[5]

But this is the brighter side. There was a darker one. It was with much travail and suffering that Fox won and paid for the success of his apostleship. Like an earlier apostle, he was often set upon by the rabble, often a mark for blows and stones and stripes. Over and over again he was haled before the magistrates, charged with speaking against the established religious authorities, and then treated with scant courtesy, often with actual rudeness and cruelty, by the occupants of the judicial seat. The list of Fox's appearances before the Bench can easily be constructed from Sewel's "History" or from his "Journal," and it would be but tedium to enumerate it here. Only one need be specified —the one which ended, as most of them did not, in sentence and a cell. The severest of Fox's trials in these years was his imprisonment in Derby jail as a blasphemer ; though for the modern reader a touch of lightness is imparted to the record inasmuch as the name "Quaker"—scornfully given to Fox by Gervas Bennett, one of the justices who sentenced him, because Fox bade Bennett tremble at the name of the Lord [6]—is to be traced back to the Derby Court. But the

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[1] Sewel, *History of the Quakers*, i. 81.   [2] *Ibid.* i. 65.
[3] *Ibid.* i. 80, 97.   [4] *Ibid.* i. 80.   [5] *Ibid.* i. 117.
[6] *Ibid.* i. 45, 46. The name, though given in scorn, is frequently used by those at whom it was flung and has now, of course, become honourable. The most usual name, however, in the body itself is "Friends."

imprisonment itself was heavy, and made heavier than it
need have been, at least for some time, by the jailer's hatred
and hardness of heart.   Yet Fox emerged from it as
undaunted as ever, and once again had "great meetings"
at Malton and elsewhere, resuming with the old success the
temporarily interrupted crusade.   And in the year after his
release—1652, the imprisonment having lasted from 1650
to 1651—Fox won an influential friend in Judge Fell of
Swarthmore Hall near Ulverstone.[1]   Mrs. Fell had been first
drawn ; but the judge passed quickly from hostility to
tolerance, and from tolerance to sympathy (though hardly to
actual conversion), finally allowing his house to become a
sort of Quaker headquarters, with his wife as its chief
correspondent, at which the preachers and adherents of the
body might find refuge and peace.   Fox had a hard road to
travel from city to city, a harder road from heart to heart,
and there were many who were ready to add something, if
they could, to the weight of his cross.   But nevertheless
there was some good ground near by, and the seed he sowed
sprung up and flourished beside the paths his feet had trod.

Of the mistakes into which Fox was impelled by the
occasionally too prominent protesting element in his pro-
paganda, something must be said.   Opponents and critics
have of course delighted to dwell on blemishes as though
they constituted the whole man.   After what has been said,
it will be clear enough that Fox's excesses, such as they
were, had their origin in his conscious antagonism towards
the existing religious order, and in the breaking out of a too
great desire to give it expression.   They merely represent,
in fact, the negative element in Fox's spiritual programme
temporarily pushing itself too far to the front.   He took
strong objection to many of the conventionalities of ordinary
intercourse, refusing to bow or to remove his hat as others
did, since these ceremonies meant that man was receiving
honours due to God alone.   He sometimes interrupted
Church services, as at Nottingham in 1649 :[2] he sometimes
spoke to a congregation after the properly appointed preacher
or lecturer had finished, as at Derby in 1650[3] (this being

[1] Sewel, *History of The Quakers*, i. 103 ff.
[2] *Ibid.* i. 38.   [3] *Ibid.* i. 44.

the occasion of his imprisonment) and at Beverley in 1651 ;[1] and in this last-named year occurred the incident which, as Mr. Harvey remarks, "is the one incident in the life of Fox which seems to tell of a brain overwrought"[2]—the incident of his treading the streets of Lichfield and crying "Woe to the bloody city" as he went.[3] It does not, taken altogether, amount to very much ; and even in regard to Fox's addressing a congregation after the preacher had ended his discourse it must be borne in mind, that for someone to do this was by no means an uncommon event in those days—the act only becoming a crime when the speaker's doctrines were found unpalatable by those who heard. When all is said that can rightly be said by way of criticism or blame, an occasional piece of foolishness is all that can be laid to Fox's charge. And even if we enter a verdict of "guilty" against him on such counts as these, the earlier conclusion declared concerning him is not invalidated one whit. They for whose eyes a few disfigurements can blot out the true man behind them, must judge as they will. For those who know what the Nonconformist spirit is, and who can recognise its truest manifestations as they come, will still reaffirm their conviction that in the teaching of George Fox the Nonconformist spirit found its worthiest expression since Wiclif's day. And they will find some cause for satisfaction in that, just when even Independency was becoming a less faithful witness to the Nonconformist spirit than it had been, this new and more faithful witness, borne by George Fox and the rapidly increasing band of "children of light," should arise.

SECTION 3

The Independent Ascendancy

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[1] Sewel, *History of The Quakers*, i. 80, 81.
[2] *The Rise of The Quakers*, p. 40.   [3] Fox's *Journal* (ed. 1901), i. 77, 78.

The dismissal of the Rump in 1653 left Cromwell and the Independents with absolute supremacy in their hands, and with the responsibility which the possession of supremacy necessarily imposed.   In some way the tangled knots of political and religious difficulty had to be untied : the weary and distracted country longed for rest ; and men might well suppose that the one mind which had ridden out all the storms, and which had in fact beaten down one storm after another when its waves became too boisterous, would be able to steer the vessel through the final stages of its voyage into port.   It remained for Cromwell and his followers to satisfy the expectation which shone in watching eyes, to justify the faith which inspired anxious and yet hopeful hearts.

We have stated that, in its very association with the making of Cromwell's settlement, Independency impaired its witness to the real Nonconformist ideal.   Nevertheless, the failure of Cromwell's first attempt at bringing matters to order arose from the fact that the Independents or their nominees looked in the true Independent direction, and indeed made a halting movement toward it.   The " Little Parliament "—which was in reality not a Parliament at all —met in July 1653.[1]   It was constituted simply by nomination : that is, the new Council of State which Cromwell and his officers had set up summoned those whom it thought competent and fitting, although each member was nominally representative of some constituency whose name was linked with his.   In selecting the members of this body Cromwell called in the help of the Independent Churches[2] and was largely guided by their advice, their lists, together with another drawn up by the Council of Officers, supplying the names from which the final list, of about one hundred and forty,[3] was made up.[4]   The ruling idea was that all the members were to be men of proved godly character, who should care for nothing but the settlement of national affairs

[1] Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), iv. 20.   A good deal of misconception concerning the Little Parliament is cleared away by H. A. Glass, in *The Barbone Parliament*.

[2] For the method of calling this Parliament, see Forster, *Eminent British Statesmen*, vii. 138-140.

[3] So Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, v. 281.   But numbers varying from 139 to 146 are given by different authorities.

[4] The list (in this case 139) is in *Somers Tracts* (ed. Scott), vi. 246.

according to God's will. It was natural enough that Crom-
well should look with great hopefulness to an Assembly thus
constituted ; and his speech at its first sitting bears testimony
to his feelings that at last the day would break and the
shadows flee away.[1] "Truly God hath called you to this
Work by, I think, as wonderful providences as ever passed
upon the sons of men in so short a time." "I confess I
never looked to see such a Day as this—it may be nor you
either—when Jesus Christ should be so owned as He is, this
day, in this Work. Jesus Christ is owned this day by the
Call of you ; and you own Him, by your willingness to
appear for Him. And you manifest this, as far as poor
creatures may do, to be a Day of the Power of Christ." So
rosy did the outlook seem—so loud did the music grow in
Cromwell's heart. Yet by December the house of hope had
tumbled down, and was seen to have been built upon the
sand.

It was the tendency of the Little Parliament toward a
too extreme—and yet towards the only consistent—Inde-
pendency that brought about its fall. To what extent
Cromwell wished the Assembly to deal with religious and
political affairs may be somewhat doubtful ; but it is surely
going too far to say that the Little Parliament was intended
to be "merely a constituent assembly, paving the way for a
Parliament on a really national basis."[2] Although the first
provision was that the Assembly should sit for no more than
fifteen months, Cromwell (in the speech before alluded to)
speaks rather doubtfully as to the ability of the nation to
elect a fit Parliament in the ordinary way ;[3] while, in words
which seem to urge a positive dealing with the religious
question, he says, "I think I need not advise, much less
press you, to endeavour the Promoting of the Gospel ; to
encourage the Ministry ; such a Ministry and such Ministers
as be faithful in the Land ; upon whom the true character
is."[4] Probably Cromwell wished for some such arrangement
as he himself afterwards made. But the Assembly was in

[1] Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas), ii. 272-303.
[2] J. R. Green, *History of the English People*, iii. 281.
[3] "Who can tell how soon God may fit the People for such a thing ? None
can desire it more than I."—Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas),
ii. 297.   [4] *Ibid.* ii. 294.

eager and perfervid mood, marched boldly up to the problem,
and without hesitation set about a frontal attack. The
majority of its members—though probably not more than a
bare majority—were of a much more advanced Independent
type than Cromwell himself, and were, indeed, moving towards
" voluntaryism " in its completeness—that is, they not only
held the Independent conception of a Church, but considered
that the maintenance of Churches by means of tithes ought
to be done away. This was no new idea. For a long period
there had been some among the Independents who, realising
the logical outcome of their principles, had taken this view.
The *Confession and Protestation* of Henry Jacob, though
not condemning tithe, had pointed to the maintenance of a
minister by his people's unforced contributions as being the
more excellent way ;[1] and echoes of this voice had been
heard now and then during the intervening years. A petition
circulated in London in 1647 had demanded, with an explicit-
ness which left no loophole for misunderstanding, that "tithes
and all other enforced maintenance may be for ever abolished,
and nothing in the place thereof imposed ; but that all
ministers may be paid only by those who voluntarily chose
them and contract with them for their labours."[2] In the
Little Parliament this doctrine had many followers. A
resolution of July 15th provided that after the 3rd of
November ministers should no longer be supported in the
old way,[3] a Committee being shortly after appointed to go
more deeply into the question, and specially to determine
whether a clergyman's interest in tithes amounted to actual
legal proprietorship and right.[4] Before the report of the
Committee was presented—and this was not until December,
so that action on the Parliament's resolution as to the
abolition of tithe after November was considerably overdue
—a further resolution of the House had pronounced for the
abolition of patronage,[5] this resolution, together with the
other, amounting in effect to a declaration for the entire
abolition of anything like a State Church. To Cromwell
himself, proposals of this kind were the reverse of welcome.

[1] Article 26.
[2] Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 484, 485.
[3] Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), iv. 22.
[4] *Ibid.* iv. 23.   [5] *Ibid.* iv. 37.

To speak of the innate conservatism of his disposition may appear strange ; yet the phrase is one which is justified by many facts ; and the innate conservatism of his disposition did but become accentuated as time went on. He was certainly not prepared to say that the State had no part at all in the provision or maintenance of religion, however generously he would have the State treat varying religious views. And the temper of the House appeared to him one out of which all manner of disastrous resolutions might be born. The issue would have been "the subversion of your Laws and of all the Liberties of this Nation, the destruction of the Ministers of this nation ; in a word, the confusion of all things." So said Cromwell at a later time.[1] What he would have done if the House had seriously sought to carry its views into practical effect, we can but conjecture, though conjecture may be fairly sure of itself in view of what it was Cromwell's habit to do with Parliaments which strayed, as he supposed, from the right path. The necessity for strong measures, however, passed away. For when the Report was at last offered to the Assembly, it was found that instead of pronouncing against tithes, the Committee had pronounced in their favour, and—this in connection with ministerial settlements, expulsions, and removals, a matter which had been added to the Committee's agenda since its appointment —had suggested Commissions with power to make new parishes and alter the boundaries of old ones, and with power, also, to effect in parishes old and new the settlement of good and able men.[2] The House, in short, had got precisely the opposite kind of report to the one it desired. The portion of the Report dealing with the question of the ministry was rejected : that portion dealing with the maintenance was never put to the vote.[3] But it was evident, from the way in which the Committee had turned round upon the House which set it up, that there was almost an exact balance of parties : the Assembly had, in point of fact, been made to look ridiculous ; and now, having no confidence in itself, and

[1] Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas), iii. 99. The phrases are put by Cromwell into another speaker's mouth, but clearly enough represent his own mind.

[2] Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs*, etc. (ed. 1853), iv. 53.

[3] *Ibid.*

knowing that it had lost the confidence of the man who had called it into being, it resigned its power into Cromwell's hands.[1]   So ended the first attempt, in the period of Cromwell's absolute supremacy, at a settlement of ecclesiastical affairs.

Spite of the brevity of its span, however, the Little Parliament is in some ways a memorable Assembly.   It stands out in English history as having made the first attempt at actual disestablishment and disendowment—an attempt fated not to be renewed for many a long day.   And it is to the credit of at least a bare majority of its members that they understood what Independency really meant.   Whether they were politically wise in formulating a disestablishment scheme at that particular juncture, is another matter. Probably they were not.   The principle of non-maintenance by the State was one which the Independents could have carried out in their own Churches without making an assault upon the establishment idea.   But certain it is that if Independents generally had been of the spirit which animated these men, Independency would have refused to demean itself by participating in the benefits of the Broad Churchism which Cromwell proceeded to set up, and would have escaped the spiritual dangers which by so participating it incurred. Independency has cause to remember the Little Parliament with respect, since it was a tendency towards a too extreme Independency that brought about the Little Parliament's fall.

The passing of this unfortunate House threw the religious problem, as it threw all other problems, back upon Cromwell's own hands.   He might indeed have waited, had he so chosen, for the assembling of a Parliament ; since the new Council of State, named by the Little Parliament before its death, was taking measures for the summoning of a really representative body of men.   But this same Council of State, by the "Instrument of Government"[2] which it drew up, permitted the Protector (it was at this juncture that the title was offered and accepted) to make Ordinances whereby any emergency might be met until Parliament could deal with the case.   It was under this provision that Cromwell acted ; and, further, his interpretation of the ultimate reference to

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[1] Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), iv. 54.
[2] Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate*, ii. 288.

Parliament was that it was the business of Parliament merely to ratify what the Protector had already done. It is as well to notice the point here, once for all, as it belongs rather to the political department of history than to the religious, and will hardly concern us along our special line. If, however, one enquires as to the cause of Cromwell's quarrels with his Parliaments the answer is to be found in the facts stated above. After the ejection of the Rump, and after Cromwell's gathering of all the reins into his hands, a distinct change in his spirit is to be discerned. Up to this point, he had been above all things anxious that not only the usual forms, but the usual realities, of government should be preserved : in the sovereignty of Parliament he had hitherto most strenuously believed ; and he had shrunk from, rather than striven after, a place in the limelight for himself as Chief. But, largely under the lesson and influence of circumstances, his mood had now changed ; and the disappointment of the Little Parliament made the turnover complete. Henceforward, while caring still for the forms of Parliamentary government, he held that the reality of governmental power was to reside in himself, and parliaments were to do little more than countersign his decrees. It was by slow steps that he had reached this ground—but, having reached it, he stood firm. The autocracy which had been forced upon him now became his glory and his boast. That he used it on the whole for the nation's good cannot be questioned by any one who looks fairly at the facts.

For the meeting of Parliament, then, Cromwell did not choose to wait. Using the power of " Ordinance " bestowed upon him by the " Instrument of Government," he, with the more or less nominal assistance of the Council of State, took the Church in hand. His scheme, whatever complications might arise in its practical working, was in elemental conception single enough.[1] It really followed the main lines laid down in that *Petition for the Propagation of the Gospel* which we saw presented to the Rump by some Independent ministers in 1652.[2] The fundamental idea of a State Church remained. Rights of patronage went untouched—

[1] See Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate*, ii. 320-326.   [2] *Supra*, p. 356.

which meant that the presentation to the majority of livings in the country was in the Protector's own gift. It was by tithes that the ministry was to be supported still, though it was hoped that some better way of achieving the desired end might presently be discovered. Cromwell was all through of the opinion which at the opening of the second Protectorate Parliament he definitely expressed—" I should think I were very treacherous if I took away tithes, till I see the legislative power settle maintenance to ministers another way." [1]   It was, therefore, by using what was left of the older system—State establishment, patronage, and tithe— that the new was to be started. Episcopacy and all the grades of hierarchal office had disappeared under successive sweeps of the legislative shears. Not much remained ; but what did remain was to be spared, and made to serve in another cause. But the new State Church was to have comprehension for its distinguishing sign. The ecclesiastical opinions—even to a great extent the doctrinal views—of any minister in the pulpits were to be looked on as matters of indifference. The ultimate questions concerning the Church's constitution and discipline were to be quietly shelved ; and the men who preached in the Church's pulpits need give no account of themselves on points like these. The lion was to lie down with the lamb. The Church was to be neither Episcopal, Presbyterian, nor Independent, and was nevertheless to be all these and almost anything else that might come along. The Church actually represented or stood for nothing definite at all in the way of systematic order : in fact, the Church in each particular town or village was nothing more, under this scheme, than a congregation of religiously minded people, without any bond of organic union whatsoever. The views of its pastor for the time being might give it the semblance of one ; but more than a semblance it could not be. The whole thing was not so much a settling of the problem, What shall the National Church be ? as a pretending that the problem did not exist. For, of course, practical effort could not be given to many— certainly not to all—of the opinions which ministers might hold : an episcopally - convinced clergyman, for instance,

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[1] Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas), ii. 538.

could hold his views in theory only, and could not hope to
see them embodied in actual fact. But still it remains true
that a minister of Cromwell's Church, provided that his own
conscience permitted, might, so far as Church organisation
was concerned, be of what faith he liked. For the keeping
out of any unworthy and undesirable applicants who might
seek entrance at a door so wide, two Committees were set
up—one the Committee of " Triers," whose business it was
to test the fitness of candidates for ministerial posts,[1] and
the other the Committee for " ejecting scandalous and
inefficient ministers,"[2] whose office is sufficiently indicated
by its name. The first Committee consisted of Presbyterians,
Congregationalists, and Baptists—men of standing like
Stephen Marshall appearing with others for the first, some
of the names we have met before (for instance, those of
Thomas Goodwin, John Owen and Sidrach Simpson)
occurring among the Congregationalists, while Toombes,
Henry Jessey, and Daniel Dyke, formed a triumvirate by
whom the Baptists were worthily represented. Some of the
members were laymen.[3] The Committee met in London,
though ministers who could not come to town might be
examined locally, the report of the local examiners being
sent up to headquarters for consideration and ratification
there. The second Committee was really a Commission,
having branches in every county, each branch constituting
a sort of Court of complaint before which any minister (or
schoolmaster) might, on the petition of a parishioner, be
arraigned. Of the practical working of all these arrange-
ments something will presently be said : for the moment, we
have only to note what the arrangements were. A State
Church, supported by tithes compulsorily levied—but a
State Church exacting no uniformity of opinion, and with a
clergy who might in their views of Church constitution and
discipline be of as many different colours as Joseph's coat—
is what Cromwell gave to the land. The parish Churches,
in short, remained parish Churches in precisely the old sense ;
but the incumbent might be a Congregational or a Baptist
or a Presbyterian minister, or the minister of any other

[1] Scobell, *A Collection of Acts and Ordinances, etc.*, ii. 279.
[2] *Ibid.* ii. 335 ff. [3] Scobell, as cited, gives the complete list.

tolerably orthodox sect that might chance to arise.   So
preachers in the Cathedrals, or Presidents of Colleges at
Oxford and Cambridge, might hold any one of the three
mentioned, and various other not mentioned, ecclesiastical
ideals.   There remained the question of " unofficial " religious
associations.   They were not forgotten ; and for those, too,
space was marked off.   Those who preferred to remain
outside even so large and tolerant an Establishment as this,
were to have liberty to worship in their own way, so long as
their doctrines did not threaten the safety and stability of
the State.   Roman Catholics were excepted, since loyalty
to the Protectorate was supposed to be impossible in a
Romanist ; and the setting up of a " prelatical " Church—
such a Church being in the minds of most people intimately
associated with support of the monarchial *régime*—still suffered
the ban under which earlier legislation had placed it.   And
any meetings for overt attack upon the essentials of the
Christian faith, or any public writing or speaking by way of
such attack, or any gathering that led to " licentiousness,"
were forbidden.   But with these exceptions, men might lay
down their own tracks away from the main road, and travel
up and down them as they would.   A State Church which
invited ministers of every persuasion to occupy its pulpits,
but which at the same time had no frown, and most assuredly
no prohibition, for those who preferred to exercise their
ministry beyond its walls—the stripping from the State
Church of any specially distinctive characteristics, and the
guaranteeing of liberty to any who, clinging to some specially
distinctive characteristics of their own, refused to be absorbed
—these were the two essentials of Cromwell's plan.

The settlement thus outlined remained in force, practic-
ally unchanged, throughout the entire ensuing period up
to Cromwell's death.   Certain changes or additions were
attempted, the proposals almost invariably involving the
Parliament which made them in disaster ; but the only
change carried through with even partial success (and this
only at the second attempt) was a change in the direction of
defining with greater exactness those " fundamentals " against
which those who remained outside the National Church must
not preach.   It was felt that the vagueness in which the

matter had been left had its difficulties, and, notwithstanding
the proviso that outside associations must not embody any
danger to the State, might afford opportunity for treason to
conceal itself under religion's robes. The thing was in fact
taking place, and it was not without plausible reason that
some tightening of the bonds was performed. At the
beginning of the Protectorate the Fifth-Monarchy men were
venting their madness without restraint. In a meeting-house
in Blackfriars a man named Feake, and another named
Vavasour Powell, inveighed openly against Cromwell and
the rule he had set up, declaring that one evil system had
been removed only in order that another, equally contrary to
the demands of Christ's sovereignty, might be put in its
place : the imagery of the Books of Daniel and Revelation
was drawn upon for lurid metaphors to be flung, with
appropriate applications, at the Protector's head ;[1] while
John Canne, now far gone in folly, put forth book after book
upon the " little horn " and the " number of the beast,"
keeping a malignant eye upon, and darting a poisonous
tongue towards, Cromwell all the time.[2] John Biddle was
in trouble again ; and not content with quietly preaching
his own doctrines in his own meeting-house, which (though
even this involved some stretching of the existing rule) he
might have continued to do as he had begun to do it,
unmolested, published a book which shot at the generally
accepted fundamentals of the Christian faith a challenge
impossible—if the law as it stood meant anything at all—
to be ignored.[3] It must be remembered that Socinianism
was still held (and not quite without excuse, on account of
its earlier real, though often exaggerated, connection with
Anabaptism of revolutionary type)[4] to imply a threat against
society, so that the surprising thing is not that the publication
of Biddle's book was visited with punishment, but that he
should have been left free to preach his Socinian doctrines

[1] For a description of the Blackfriars meetings, see *Calendar of State Papers*
(Domestic Series 1653, 1654), pp. 304-308 ; also Stoughton, *History of Religion
in England* (ed. 1881), ii. 62-68.

[2] Hanbury, *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents*, iii. chapters
80 and 81.

[3] Toulmin, *A Review of the Life, Character and Writings of Rev. John
Biddle*, pp. 108, 109.

[4] See *supra*, p. 130.

till the publication of his book made it impossible to keep
closed eyes any more.   In face of things like these, Cromwell
came gradually to see the advisability of setting up here and
there fences over which no one must climb.   The responsi-
bilities of his position—as the responsibilities of exalted
position usually do—opened his eyes to the necessity of
defining the boundaries of the territory over which man's
untrammelled will might rule and roam.   He came to see, at
least, that there were certain varieties of thought and opinion
which could not be expressed in words without suggesting
dangerous deeds—a general principle which (whatever may
be judged as to Cromwell's particular applications of it) few
will dispute.   " Pretensions to ' liberty of conscience,' what
are they leading us towards !   Liberty of Conscience and
Liberty of the Subject—two as glorious things to be con-
tended for, as any that God hath given us ; yet both these
abused for the patronising of villanies ! "   So said Cromwell
at the opening of the Parliament of 1654.[1]   Even so, how-
ever, the limitations did not amount to much.   The first
Protectorate Parliament discussed the question of " funda-
mentals," and appointed a Committee of ministers [2] (on
which, it should in fairness be stated, the Presbyterian Baxter
appears to have taken larger views than his Independent
colleagues) [3] to determine what the said " fundamentals "
were.   But at this time Cromwell had not brought himself
to any liking for such measures of circumscription as Parlia-
ment desired ; and the hasty dissolution which soon ensued
caused the whole thing to fall through.   In 1657, however,
Cromwell gave his assent to the " Humble Petition and
Advice " presented to him by Parliament,[4] which document,
while perpetuating the general religious settlement now for
some years in force, asked for the drawing up of a " Con-
fession of Faith " not to be reviled by any one with
" opprobrious words."   The " Confession " was never, as a
matter of fact, drawn up ; but it was made sufficiently clear
that outside religious associations were not to be permitted

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[1] Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas), ii. 345.

[2] Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate*, iii. 43.

[3] *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, i. 198, 199.   Neal, *History of The Puritans*, iv.
88, 89.

[4] Scobell, *Collection of Acts and Ordinances*, ii. 378-383.

or protected unless belief in the Trinity and in the inspiration of the Bible were accepted. This was undoubtedly a restriction of the freedom which Cromwell's system as at first established had allowed. But one is justified in holding that, had any lengthened period of rule remained to Cromwell after the " Humble Petition and Advice," he would have given to its clauses and to those of its consequent "Confession of Faith" the largest latitude that considerations of public welfare seemed to him to permit. It was, indeed, not at his initiative at all that the limitation was introduced : it came in only when Parliament renewed a request which other Parliaments had previously made ; and the Protector was this time moved to consent by considerations bidding him over-ride personal preferences which he would much rather have followed out. This is not mere unwarranted assertion or surmise. The whole tenor of Cromwell's actions in this matter compels one to the conclusion that Cromwell would go no further than the forging of a weapon which he would use only in an emergency, and which he would, if he could, allow to repose idly against the wall. Limitations might be necessary ; but Cromwell hoped that the enacted limitations, held *in terrorem* over extremer folk, might make these crouch into silence, so that in the case of less flagrant breaches of the law the rule could be waived. Cromwell, in fact, frequently refused to see and, when he saw, frequently refused to act. Even John Biddle was released after ten months' imprisonment, although, as he could not keep quiet, and engaged in a public disputation, he was speedily arraigned once more, to be banished to Scilly, again obtaining release in 1658.[1] The Ordinance against the use of the Prayer Book [2]—issued in 1655 when Royalist intrigues were cropping up with mushroom-like vigour and swiftness—was never enforced ;[3] and even in the arrangements under the " Humble Petition and Advice " no prohibition of it was suggested or implied. In fine, therefore, Cromwell's ecclesiastical and religious system remained throughout the whole Protectorate as previously sketched,

[1] Toulmin, *A Review of the Life, Character, and Writings of Rev. John Biddle*, pp. 109, 117, 122, 125.

[2] Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate*, iii. 177.

[3] Masson, *Life of Milton*, v. 62.

only one change—and that a change practically inoperative —being made in it between the beginning and the end.

A certain picturesqueness—at least the picturesqueness of variety—distinguishes the religious aspect of the country under the Cromwellian *régime*. It is a little difficult, and yet it is interesting, to conjure up a comprehensive idea of a general state of things wherein members of nearly every religious denomination helped to work a system which cannot have perfectly satisfied any one of them. Yet the endeavour is worth making, and with the aid of a few definite facts can be made. We know, for instance, that Congregational ministers held office as parish clergymen or as "lecturers" under town authorities, while at the same time Congregational Churches were formed outside the State system. In this way two different kinds of Congregational Churches came into existence—those in one class meeting in the parish Churches (known as "Reformed" Churches), their buildings and ministers being maintained at the nation's charge, and those in the other meeting separately (the name of these being "Gathered" Churches) and supporting themselves after the modern Congregational way. Things naturally became somewhat complicated ; and further complications arose because sometimes the same man was both the parish minister and the minister of a "gathered" congregation, and because even the "gathered" congregation sometimes met in the parish Churches when the regular services were not going on. Indeed, this common usage of buildings went further, and in some places, where a building was large, a Congregational Church might be worshipping in one part of it while a congregation of another religious complexion was worshipping elsewhere under the same roof. In this way it happened that both at Westminster and St. Albans Abbeys and in Exeter Cathedral Congregational Churches had their home.[1] Among the Congregational ministers who occupied London rectories under the Protectorate, may be mentioned Joseph Caryl and Philip Nye, while John Owen remained Dean of Christ Church in the University of Oxford, and Thomas

[1] Wilson, *History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches of London*, iii. 152 ; Calamy, *Account of Silenced Ministers* (in his abridgment of Baxter's *Life*, ed. 1713, ii. 41) ; Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), ii. 219 ; Urwick, *Nonconformity in Herts*, pp. 136-138.

Goodwin Master of Magdalen College in the same University
—Owen having given up his ministry at Coggeshall in 1651
to take his new Oxford post, and Goodwin having been
appointed in 1650, both preferments therefore really dating
from the period when Presbyterianism was still nominally in
the ascendant, but really drooping to its decline. It may be
noted, too, that both these men, as well as John Howe, were
among Cromwell's private chaplains.[1] The Congregationalists,
we had better note before quitting them, issued in 1658 (partly,
perhaps, to prevent their exact position becoming lost in
vagueness, as in the curious ecclesiastical situation that
existed it might easily do, and partly, perhaps, as Hanbury
suggests,[2] with a view to that "Confession of Faith" projected
in the "Humble Petition and Advice"[3]) a statement of their
own theological belief, being the first formulated document
of the kind which they had given to the world. Appended
to it was a declaration of Congregational ideas upon the
question of Church constitution and government—a declara-
tion which, while it undoubtedly justified the position of the
"gathered" Congregational Churches, formed rather an
accusation against, than a vindication of, the practice of
ministers and members who linked themselves with the
national scheme.[4] In regard to the Baptists, a similar set
of circumstances, though with modifications, is to be remarked.
At first, indeed, the Baptists were afraid of what Cromwell's
personal supremacy might bring forth, a petition drawn up
for presentation to the Protector showing very clearly that
some of them felt or fancied themselves to be threatened
men.[5] It was probably supposed that the confusion between
Fifth-Monarchy men and genuine Baptists, which beset many,
might infect Cromwell's mind. But the fear soon passed
away, and the Baptists, though not in such large numbers
as their Congregational Brethren, allowed themselves to be

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[1] For these and other similar particulars see Stoughton, *History of Religion
in England* (ed. 1881), ii. chaps. 7 and 8; and Dale, *History of Congrega-
tionalism*, p. 377.

[2] *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents*, iii. 515.

[3] *Supra*, p. 382.

[4] Hanbury, *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents*, iii. chap. 82.
The part dealing with Church order is also in Dale, *History of Congregationalism*,
pp. 386-388.

[5] Ivimey, *History of English Baptists*, i. 220-228.

roped in within the new ecclesiastical ground. Henry Jessey
added to the charge of his Southwark Church the rectory of
St. George's, Stepney ;[1] and we have already come upon his
name with that of two other Baptists, upon the "Triers'"
list. It is easily understandable that men of keen Baptist
views would be less ready than were others to accept the
national settlement, since a special Baptist propaganda from
the pulpit of a parish Church would have its very peculiar
difficulties ; and as a matter of fact the number of Baptist
incumbents, though not so insignificant as is sometimes
represented,[2] never reached the Congregational level. The
Baptist congregations were formed, for the most part, as
"gathered" Churches, not as "reformed." So far as
Congregationalism is concerned, it was perhaps Congrega-
tionalism, rather than Congregational Churches, that increased
during the Protectorate—though the statement, it must be
remembered, has only a relative and comparative truth. The
Congregational "gathered" Churches make no despicable
show. But it was not in or through them, chiefly, that
Congregationalism grew. With parish pulpits open to
Congregational ministers, and with parish pews open to
Congregational hearers, without let or hindrance, Congrega-
tional ideas undoubtedly spread far and wide ; but while
this leavening would, and did, mean a large multiplication
of Congregational Churches when later on the system fell
and ejectment came, it tended for the time being to
restrict the formation of Congregational societies properly
so called. The Baptists, for the reason just given, were
more active in their own more fully distinctive way. Also
it should be noticed that the General Baptists had even
more cause than the Calvinistic Baptists to lay down and
travel upon their separate set of rails, since their Arminian
doctrines, as well as their Baptist views, ran counter to
the generally accepted standards of belief. Very definite
information is available as to the formation of General
Baptist Churches in Lincolnshire during the Protectorate,[3]

[1] Ivimey, *History of English Baptists*, i. 263.
[2] Ivimey (*ibid.* i. 328, 329) gives a list of Baptists ejected in 1662. He
is probably wrong as to the date, since Baptist incumbents were most likely
turned out in 1660. But those he names had been certainly included in the
Cromwellian settlement.
[3] Taylor, *History of the General Baptists*, i. 129-137.

and what happened in Lincolnshire was probably happening elsewhere. At any rate, leaving the distinction between the Arminian and Calvinistic Baptists out of account, it is certain that of the Baptist adherents, while many joined hands with the rest to form Cromwell's ecclesiastical ring, the larger number only looked on, grateful for the toleration which the newly-established system brought, but unable to contribute positive force to its working. Passing from the two branches of Independency to Presbyterianism, we come upon the fact that, while Independency imparted the governing spirit to the Protectorate settlement, Presbyterians nevertheless formed the party in most effective possession, so far as mere numbers go. That is, Presbyterian incumbents still outnumbered the rest : what happened may perhaps be summed up by saying that, though Presbyterianism in its strictness went, Presbyterians remained. There was no reason, under Cromwell's arrangement, why Presbyterian clergymen who chose to accept that arrangement should be disturbed : [1] the arrangement, indeed, necessarily involved their confirmation in their posts ; and we know that in London Presbyterian ministers —such as Calamy and Bates—maintained a vigorous and flourishing ministry through these years,[2] while the University of Cambridge, the changes in whose *personnel* dated from the beginning of the wars, and which consequently had numbers of Presbyterians on its staff, retained its Presbyterian colouring.[3] Also, the large number of Presbyterian clergymen who came out under the Act of Uniformity in 1662 proves from how many Presbyterian pulpits there had sounded, during the immediately preceding period, a Presbyterian voice. The Presbyterian *system* was, of course, another matter, and could hardly flourish in the new air, so unfavourable to any definite ecclesiastical system as this was. The London Synod became practically extinct during the Protectorate, complaining that "the distraction of the times" prevented it from doing any effectual work.[4] The country Synods and Presbyteries, never having been so firmly established nor so fully matured as the

[1] The "Triers" were commissioned to examine clergymen who had been appointed during the preceding few months, but their work was not otherwise retrospective.

[2] See Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), ii. 174-179.

[3] *Ibid.* ii. 261.　　　　[4] Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 539.

London, still more easily and surely died. Baxter, however, hit upon a sort of substitute in his Worcestershire Association, wherein ministers of all the denominations were comprised, and which aimed at such order, discipline, and systematising as were consistent with the breadth of the new order.[1] Other counties followed suit;[2] and one can well believe that voluntary associations of the kind did much to correct and compensate for the looseness which Cromwell's system inevitably engendered. Baxter's own large-hearted charity is indicated in his statement about the meetings held in connection with the Worcestershire scheme. " I must confess this was the comfortablest time of all my life," he says, " through the great delight I had in the company of that society of honest, sincere, laborious, humble ministers of Christ. . . . I so well know their self-denial, impartiality, peaceableness, and exemplary lives . . . that it is pleasant to me to remember the converse I had with them."[3] But this had never been the real Presbyterian tone, and of course the " Associations " were only dim shadows of a real Presbyterian institution. The full and valid Presbyterian system could find no *locus standi* in a Broad Church order like Cromwell's; and it was swept away, not so much by direct action as by a flank movement which left it stranded. Or, we may say that it was like a player left standing with opened lips, but voiceless, because his part in the drama has suddenly been torn from the book. But though the Presbyterian system was rendered useless, the Presbyterian ministry remained, to bear its part, and that an important and prominent part, in the religious work of Protectorate times. These facts (and they are but a selection of many which invite record) may help a mental reconstruction of the scene. A diversified and picturesque view the whole thing must have presented to any disinterested spectator's eye—with a sort of quite kaleidoscopic quality in it, as Congregationalists, Baptists, and Presbyterians,

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[1] Baxter, *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, Part II. pp. 148-150.

[2] Shaw, *History of the English Church, 1640-1660*, ii. 172-174, 440-456. Drysdale, *History of the Presbyterians in England*, pp. 367-369. See also an interesting article on the Cambridgeshire Association in *English Historical Review*, x. 744-753.

[3] *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, Part II. p. 150. In an appendix to the volume, Baxter deals with some objections made against his plan.

to say nothing of an occasional Episcopalian, shifted to and fro and dropped themselves simultaneously or successively into the various pulpits of the land.

The allusion to the "occasional Episcopalian," however, necessitates some mention of the position, under the Protectorate, of the adherents of the older religious system. The "occasional Episcopalian" spoken of as finding a place in a Cromwellian pulpit actually existed : indeed he existed in sufficient numbers to make the epithet "occasional" somewhat inappropriate. In fact, the number of episcopal clergy thrown out from their livings during the entire period from 1640 onwards is usually greatly exaggerated by episcopal and royalist partisans. It is quite true that the number has also been under-stated again and again by writers on the other side ; but no one of these has reached the absurdity of Walker, who contrives to make the number of ejected clergymen total up to ten thousand by the ingenious device of reckoning in those who "would have suffered if death had not prevented,"[1] and by conjoining various other instances of curious and original calculation to this. Something under two thousand may in all probability be taken as a fair estimate.[2] It may be unhesitatingly admitted that it was far more difficult for an Episcopalian minister than for a Presbyterian or an Independent to hold office under the Protectorate scheme ; and also that the feeling of Cromwell towards the Episcopalian clergy and the Episcopalian system in the abstract was extremely suspicious, not to say hostile—this latter circumstance appearing natural enough when it is remembered how intimately Episcopalianism was associated with the "malignant" or royalist cause. This latter fact, indeed, was the governing one ; and had it ceased to hold good, Cromwell's active hostility to the system would have disappeared. Bishop Kennett himself has preserved for us a remark of the Protector's to the effect that "to disturb them (the Episcopalians) is contrary to that liberty of conscience which he and his friends always acknowledged and defended." And Kennett records his

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[1] *Sufferings of the Clergy*, i. 198-200.
[2] See Neal, *History of the Puritans*, iii. 111-113 ; and Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), i. 423-426.

own opinion that "the prejudice Cromwell had against the
Episcopal party was more for their being Royalists than for
being of the good old Church."[1]   But Royalists they were,
and had to take the consequences.   For adherents of the
older Church, taken in the mass, it was a hard time.   Evelyn
records how on one Christmas Day (the observance of
Church festivals being a forbidden thing) the Church in
which he and his friends were worshipping was surrounded
by soldiers who, however, allowed worship to proceed to
its close.[2]   The higher clergy—whose titles and functions
were of course unrecognised in Cromwell's "Broad Church,"
and for whom anything in the nature of compromise was
almost impossible—had to disappear, some of them, like
Cosin, going abroad, where the Bishops carefully made
arrangements for the preservation of the episcopal succession,
and where (at Paris, Rouen, and other places) the real
centres of Episcopal Church life during the period were to
be found.[3]   Yet it was to the system, not to the men, that
Cromwell was hostile.   We have already noted that the
ordinance against the use of the Prayer Book, severe as it
was, remained practically inoperative, being really no more
than powder and shot stored up at the rear, in view of
emergencies which prudence could not disregard ; and it
may now be added that in more than one instance the
Protector showed feelings of personal friendliness towards
clergymen whom officially he was obliged to oppose.
Certainly he left them undisturbed whenever he could.
Juxon, the Bishop who had comforted the last moments of
King Charles on the scaffold, lived quietly at his country
seat :[4] the aged Ussher of Armagh had at least two inter-
views of utmost cordiality with Cromwell, the Protector
finally ordering a contribution from the public funds towards
an honourable funeral, when he passed away.[5]   So marked
was Cromwell's friendliness to some of the Episcopalians,
that Wilkins, who subsequently conformed at the Restoration,

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[1] Quoted by Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), ii.
321 note.   [2] *Diary and Correspondence* (ed. Bray), i. 323.
[3] Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), ii. 303-306.
Blaxland, *The Struggle with Puritanism*, p. 103.
[4] Hook, *Lives of The Archbishops of Canterbury*, xi. 417.
[5] Elrington's *Life of Ussher*. (In Ussher's *Works*, i. 274, 278.) Elrington,
however, considers Cromwell's contribution to the funeral expenses mean.

suggests that the Protector had not been far from following the example, or rather from setting it, and had really been a favourer of the episcopal worship and system at heart.[1] There is no slightest evidence of this, and a good deal of evidence the other way ; but Wilkins's suggestion may serve to show that Cromwell's willingness to let sleeping dogs lie can hardly be questioned. So much in regard to Episcopalians of strictest conscience, who found themselves unable to make any kind of terms with their foe. But some clergymen even of this type, it remains to be said, contrived to keep their places, anything in the nature of inquisition or arraignment occurring only spasmodically, and the staunch preachers on the whole having their way. Hacket used the Book of Common Prayer at Cheam, spite of all prohibition ; and near Bristol, Bull repeated its contents without having the actual Book before him. Those of the clergy who were willing to surrender all use of the distinctive episcopal formularies, thus stooping sufficiently to get beneath Cromwell's bars, of course had a still easier time. Among these the best known is Pearson, the famous writer on the Creed ; but he was only one among a number who make up a by no means insignificant crowd.[2] The " occasional Episcopalian " before alluded to does, in point of fact, take fairly frequent turns in the procession of ministers who passed through Cromwell's pulpits. And while the admission must certainly be made that to the Episcopalian, specially if his conscience was sensitive, the way must have seemed far more strait, the gate far more narrow, than to members of other creeds, it cannot be allowed that even upon him there was any wanton infliction of disability or pain. The tendency was to make things as easy for him as might be. And so a good many of the Episcopal clergy[3] remained in possession of their pulpits till the whirligig of time brought its revenges, and the Restoration enabled them to hold their posts, not at all by sufferance, but in virtue of strictly legal right again.

[1] Masson, *Life of Milton*, v. 62.
[2] For these and others, see Overton, *Life in The English Church, 1660-1714*, pp. 4-6, and for fuller particulars, Stoughton, *History of Religion in England* (ed. 1881), ii. 284-287.
[3] Dale estimates six thousand (*History of Congregationalism*, p. 341).

From the Episcopalians, for whom, out of all those who found it at all possible to enter within the bounds of Cromwell's plan, entrance was most difficult, thought steps naturally over to the Quakers, for whom entrance was of course quite impossible, and who under the Protectorate fared the worst. It was wholly out of the question for Fox and his disciples—thrown into antagonism as they were towards anything and everything in the way of "externals" —to find a place in a system which purchased religious peace at what they would have deemed a ruinous cost : it was their business, in fact, to bring not peace but a spiritual sword. And the rapid spread of the Friends in Protectorate times resulted in their very positive hostility to existing religious and other institutions being met by equally positive hostility. It could not have been otherwise : their interpretation of the primary Quaker principles prevented the Friends from profiting by those clauses in Cromwell's settlement under which quiet worshippers outside the Establishment might enjoy quiet themselves ; and, while one regrets that the spirit of opposition to Quakerism should so often have reached the point of savage retaliation and riotous revenge, one must admit that, the Quakers being what they were and thinking as they did, something in the nature of actual conflict was bound to come. Their own resistance to the existing system did not stop at the stage of passive witness against it ; and penalty could not be escaped.

The spread of Quakerism, it has been said, was swift during Cromwell's day. Fox himself, as his *Journal* records for us, continued his itinerant preaching and showed everywhere the magnetic power which had distinguished him from the first ; but it was as if he imparted not only the spirit that was in him, but that spirit's power of and impulse to self-propagation, to convert after convert ; so that each new branch the tree put forth became a new root in its turn. Certainly in many cases it was so ; and the names of Miles Halhead, William Dewsbury, Robert Widders and John Audland are but four gathered almost at random from the pages of a Quaker historian who sets down many more.[1] The first Quaker martyr, James Parnell, merits tender re-

[1] Sewel, *History of The Quakers*, i. 99, 129, 136, 155, 219, etc.

membrance ; and the tale of his death within prison walls is as pathetic as any on record.[1] Two friends, Thomas Shortland and Ann Langley, were with him when the last shadows settled, or rather when the light arose. To Shortland he said, " This death must I die, Thomas, I have seen great things ; don't hold me, but let me go." Then to Ann Langley, " Will you hold me ? " " No, dear heart," was the answer, " we will not hold thee." " He had often said, that one hour's sleep would cure him of all : and the last words he was heard to say, were ' Now I go ' ; and then stretched out himself, and slept about an hour, and breathed his last." There were many more who, like Parnell, were ready to spend themselves for the cause, and to die for it if need be. In 1654, Sewel notes, " there were now above sixty ministers of the Word raised among them." [2] In the year named the stream of Quaker influence, flowing southward, reached the capital at last, winning there so many converts that a large room at the " Bull and Mouth " in Aldersgate Street was hired for the meetings, smaller gatherings to the number of at least thirty being held elsewhere.[3] In this period, too, we begin to find mention of " Monthly Meetings " and " General Meetings," the implication being both that the Quakers were multiplying and that—although no definite organisation was attempted—they were realising the necessity of consultation upon their common affairs. So the doctrines of Fox were finding their way through towns and counties, into all the centres of life and industry and into all the nooks and crannies of the land. In fact, during the whole period of the Protectorate the Quaker movement had the force of a tidal wave, and the Quaker influence filled the country like a rushing mighty wind.

But it was precisely the spread of Quakerism that brought into prominence the disadvantages under which it laboured. Its religious individualism, the excessive lengths to which its contempt for organisation was driven, the extreme readiness with which it gave the protesting and

[1] Sewel, *History of The Quakers*, i. 201. See also Charlotte Fell-Smith's *Life of James Parnell*, p. 77. A popular account of Parnell may be found in T. Hodgkin's *The Trial of Our Faith, and Other Papers*, pp. 276-300.

[2] *History of The Quakers*, i. 148.

[3] *Ibid.* i. 148, 154; Crouch, *Posthuma Christiana* (*Friends' Library*, xi. 301); Beck and Ball, *The London Friends' Meetings*, p. 24.

negative spirit the rein, led in some of its adherents to consequences from which Fox himself was quite safe. Fox's own peculiarities we have already noticed, and during the Protectorate they brought him into trouble again and again. An imprisonment at Carlisle (in 1653) followed upon a disturbance in the "steeple-house," as he termed it and similar buildings which were really the parish Churches ;[1] and had it not been for the intervention of the "Little Parliament," imprisonment might have led on to death.[2] Fox having been thus rendered even more conspicuous than formerly, his steps were dogged by foes, while warning to the authorities preceded and followed him wherever his course might lie ; nor was the pretext of supposed Royalist plots thought too absurd to be employed by way of securing his arrest. In no case could the pretence be made good ; but Fox's refusal to take off his hat in Court led (at Launceston in 1656) to a fine of twenty marks, with the alternative of close confinement till the fine was paid, six months passing before Fox was set free.[3] But Fox's own faults were, as always, trivial, and scarcely deserved the name. Peculiarities, rather than faults, is the lighter designation they may well bear. It was not Fox, but some of his disciples, that gave occasion to the enemy to blaspheme ; and it must be added, also, that in the popular mind some who mimicked and burlesqued the Quaker movement, but in nowise represented it—such as the Ranters—were identified with the movement itself. The popular mind, indeed, in some instances of its special foolishness, went so far as to confuse Quakerism and Catholicism, and to suppose that Quakerism was Jesuitism in disguise,[4] an ever-recurring suspicion which had been entertained concerning Separatism previously, and was again to be entertained concerning Methodism later on. As a result of these confusions of thought and of the tempers to which they gave birth, Quaker meetings were invaded and broken up, Quakers everywhere were loaded with an opprobrium they did not, even by their

[1] Sewel, *History of The Quakers*, i. 125.
[2] *Ibid.* i. 135, 136. [3] *Ibid.* i. 242, 246.
[4] See, for example, *Records of A Church of Christ meeting in Broadmead, Bristol* (ed. Underhill, Hanserd Knollys Society), pp. 44, 45, and Prynne's *The Quakers Unmasked*.

opponents' tests and prejudices, deserve, and the children of light fell, at the tribunal of the crowd's judgment, under the same condemnation as those children of the darkness with whom they really had no part nor lot. But in some cases genuine members of the Quaker community gave sad illustrations of the consequences to which unrestrained individualism, even in religion, may give rise. Occasionally one would appear almost or altogether unclothed before an audience, as a " sign " to the people that they were in the sight of God ungarmented of anything good.[1] And in one notorious instance, it was not only a genuine, but a prominent, member of the body that brought scandal and disgrace upon the cause. James Nayler[2] went so far as to permit disciples to kneel and bow before him, on the pretext that they were honouring the Spirit of Christ which he possessed. Then, notwithstanding the earnest remonstrances of Fox himself, he went further, and rode into Bristol with a man walking bareheaded before him, while women at his side cried, " Holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts, Hosannah in the highest." Nayler paid dearly for his transgression ; for the second Protectorate Parliament sentenced him to repeated whippings, to the pillory, to boring of the tongue, and to imprisonment for an indefinite time. He afterwards repented with evident sincerity, and died reconciled to the Friends whose cause he had betrayed. But it is not sur- prising that, with even the quietest Quakers becoming aggressive in the way of protest and disturbance, and with Quakerism or imitations and abuses of it occasionally running to riot and excess, hot anger should have been aroused. With less than actually happened, the anger of the mob would have been comprehensible : the actual happenings account easily enough for the anger of those in high place. It cannot be denied that the movement did constitute a danger to that ecclesiastical and religious peace for which the country longed and which the Cromwellian settlement certainly did much to secure. And although a sober judg- ment will not visit Quakerism as a whole with any blame

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[1] Harvey, *The Rise of the Quakers*, p. 101. Fox, though he never did such things himself, suggests this interpretation of the " sign."

[2] For Nayler's case, see Sewel, *History of The Quakers*, i. 256 ff. and Fox's *Journal*.

for such follies as those of the unclothed preachers or for
such sins as that into which Nayler fell, it must be declared
again that if Fox had realised the *whole* demands of the spirit
whose demands, within limits and up to a certain point, he
realised so well, and if he had allowed a naturally-developed
organisation to follow when the stirrings of the new inner
life grew strong, much of the difficulty which Quakerism had
to face in Cromwell's days, and much of the persecution it
had to endure, might have been escaped. As it was,
Quakerism practically compelled the government to take
measures against it as against a foe.

Cromwell's personal leanings, however, in regard to the
Friends, as in regard to the Episcopalians, were in the
direction of being kind when he could. It is to his credit
that this was so, for in some respects the action of the
Quakers touched him home. From the first it had been
one of Fox's convictions—one of the implications, as Fox
read them, of his new inner condition—that oaths of any
kind were contrary to the laws of God ; and when some of
his followers in the army refused to swear allegiance to
Cromwell as Protector,[1] Cromwell must have felt that the
very foundations and buttresses of his position were
threatened with undermining of most insidious kind. Some
of the Quakers were not slow in writing to Cromwell in
tones of reproof, and in language quite the reverse of com-
plimentary, Edward Burrough at times keeping up a veritable
bombardment of epistolary bullets that must have irritated,
even if they did not deeply wound.[2] The Lord's con-
troversy was against the Protector—said Burrough—because
he had not been faithful in God's work : he was taking his
rest and ease upon a lofty mountain of pride and vainglory :
he had set himself up to be worshipped, and had exalted
his own horn. It cannot have been easy for Cromwell to
keep down the spirit of resentment under provocation like
this. Yet so far as circumstances allowed, he showed an
inclination to mercy's side. He endeavoured, though vainly,
to obtain from Parliament some mitigation of Nayler's
severe doom.[3] His demeanour towards Fox shows that he

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[1] Sewel, *History of the Quakers*, i. 147.
[2] *Ibid.* i. 225, 304, 341.
[3] *Ibid.* i. 262.

was able to raise the curtain and see the real man with his heart of truth behind. The two men met at Whitehall in 1654, Fox being under arrest on one of the often-made charges of Royalist treason, and having been sent up that the Protector might conduct an examination face to face. The accusation of Royalism could not survive that exchange of glances, as the transparent honesty of Cromwell's gaze found itself answered by an equally transparent honesty in that of Fox : controversial religious talk followed ; and, although neither of the two strong men gave way, Cromwell recognised that here was no criminal, no plotter, no mere firebrand, but a man who had in him something of the real prophetic strain. " Come again to my house," said the Protector as they parted, " if you and I were but an hour a day together, we should be nearer to each other."[1] It is in the light of an incident such as this that Cromwell's attitude towards Quakerism must be judged. Lenient he would have been if he could. He could discriminate, where most others could not, between the essential thing and the excess, between the Quaker soul and the adventitious trappings by which it was so frequently and so sadly disguised. But leniency, in regard to the Friends, had its special difficulties. The masses of men, and even the majority of those in any place of authority and power, could scarcely hold these people (and there was much excuse) to be anything else than disturbers of the peace. The Friends had to take the consequences of the general attitude they assumed. It was largely an attitude negative and protesting : in not a few cases this negative and protesting attitude exaggerated itself to the point of becoming a nuisance and a danger ; and general opinion, as general opinion always will, confused the exaggeration with the normal, and allowed all other feelings to be drowned in anger and scorn. Under the Protectorate settlement the Quakers, notwithstanding Cromwell's personal desire to tolerate all to whom toleration could with any sort of safety be extended, had by force of circumstances to bear a very heavy cross.

[1] Fox's *Journal* (ed. 1901), i. 209-211. Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (ed. Lomas), ii. 464. There were two other meetings between Cromwell and Fox, but not such another close spiritual approach. See Carlyle, as cited, iii. 212.

Coming back to the general working of the Cromwellian
system, we naturally enquire whether in such a scheme
countless practical difficulties did not arise.   That so few
did actually arise speaks volumes for the Protector's power
of preventing heterogeneous elements from flying apart.
Yet difficulties were not wholly absent—and this quite
apart from the principle of the thing.   At some points of
the machine there were bound to be parts that did not
properly interlock, screws that worked loose, bearings that
grew hot.   When the parishioners of St. Mary's, Fish Street,
complain that they cannot find in Mr. Brookes' ministry
" that comfort to their souls they hoped," [1] we have an
illustration of what was going on in a good many places
besides St. Mary's.   A minister might, on some important
questions of Church order, be at variance with his congrega-
tion, and in an imprudent moment might say a word which
turned out to be as a spark to dry grass.   A preacher of
Independent conviction might succeed one of Presbyterian
type, or *vice versa* ; and even though matters of ecclesiastical
controversy were avoided, the general atmosphere would
show change, and unrest and dissatisfaction creep in.[2]   Such
things as these, however, might to a considerable extent be
got over by care in the exercise of a patron's rights—these
rights being, as has been stated, left undisturbed.   There
were other quarters from which stronger winds were likely
to blow.   It is impossible to survey the entire arrangement
without feeling that the Board of " Triers " constituted a
danger-spot ; and, in point of fact, much complaint was
made.   Men like John Goodwin objected to the method *in
toto* ;[3] and a Baptist protest compared the " Triers " to the
old High Commission Court of the Laudian time.[4]   But,
apart from fundamental objection to the method in itself,
it was urged that the " Triers " abused their powers, treated
candidates with ridicule, and permitted mere prejudice to
have the last word.   Walker,[5] of course, puts the case at its

[1] Waddington, *Congregational History*, ii. 532.
[2] For an instance of practical difficulties in working the system, consult an
article entitled *Trouble in a City Parish*, by J. A. Dodd (*English Historical
Review*, x. 41-54).
[3] Jackson's *Life of Goodwin* (2nd ed.), pp. 364 ff.
[4] Ivimey, *History of English Baptists*, i. 230, 231.
[5] *Sufferings of the Clergy*, i. 170 ff.

worst, and represents the Commissioners as putting to candi-
dates enquiries which are practically without meaning at all,
evidently designed to confuse, thus bringing about an
apparent justification for turning men back. The " breath,"
" heat," " sense " and " action " of the soul figure in an
account of the interview which Anthony Sadler declares
himself to have had with the " Triers," Philip Nye being in
the chair.[1] No authentic records survive ; but the impartial
reader, while slow to credit all that complainers say, will be
equally slow to discredit all, and will think it probable that
the " Triers," being men, and occupying a position of
practically unchecked and irresponsible power, may some-
times have swerved from the line of strict justice. That
when a candidate came up for testing, an initial prejudice
on both sides, heightened by subsequent fencing, may often
have degraded the whole examination into a business of
random hitting, is an extremely likely thing. There are,
however, facts on the other side, facts which show that
unless particular passions or enmities or jealousies were
aroused, the " Triers " conducted their business with fairness
and serious care. We have noted already that not a few
Episcopalians kept their livings under the Protectorate—and
these must have been stamped by the Board. Fuller, the
Church historian who has been repeatedly quoted in these
pages, made application, and, having been coached by John
Howe (a striking instance of friendliness) secured his pass.[2]
But, when everything is said, the wheels of the Com-
missioners' chariot must often have been driven in somewhat
zigzag style. In any case, the examiners were sure to
become the targets of criticism. It could not but be that
many tongues should shoot forth obloquy, deserved or
undeserved or partially deserved, upon the " Triers " ; and
even Hanbury, who is bent upon making out for them the best
case he can, admits that " eventually clamour and prejudice
rose high and strong against them ; persevering malice and
revenge distorted or perverted, and also perpetuated, their
actions and mistakes."[3] There were less prominent spots

[1] *Inquisitio Anglicana, or, The Disguise Discovered, etc.*, p. 9. See also
Hanbury, *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents*, iii. 425-428.
[2] Calamy's *Life of Howe* (*Library of Christ. Biog.*, ed. Jackson, xi. 20, 21).
[3] *Historical Memorials relating to the Independents*, iii. 429, 430.

at which friction arose.   The " gathered " congregations some-
times felt themselves to be at a disadvantage compared with
those that met in the parish Church, and to a considerable
extent annulled the value of their witness by asking for the
allotment of a public hall or building for their own use.[1]
Sometimes—though the majority of these cases occurred
during Richard Cromwell's brief tenure of office, when
tendencies, existing but restrained in his father's time, grew
forceful and restless—the Presbyterians were supposed by
the Independents to be too eagerly grasping at all the good
things for themselves ; and petitions, either for one Church
to be surrendered to them, or for a Church to be divided
into two parts, or for a defining of parish " spheres of
influence," were   sent   to   headquarters   with   an   earnest
prayer   that   they   might   be   favourably   received.[2]   Most
difficult of all was the problem, which an Independent parish
clergyman must necessarily face, of administering, or refusing
to administer, the sacraments to parishioners, irrespective of
enquiry into spiritual qualifications on the participants' part.
Thus to administer them was, according to Independent
idea, to do dishonour to God, while to withhold them was
really outside the power of a minister holding a State-
controlled and State-paid parish cure.   This refusal of the
sacraments was one of the ways in which the Mr. Brookes
previously mentioned [3]—the minister of St. Mary's, Fish
Street—had sinned in his parishioners' eyes.   In more than
one instance the matter came into the Courts of Law,[4] the
judge being of course compelled to decide against the
minister, and usually authorising the parishioners to refuse
tithes until their pastor satisfied those legal conditions which
he had forfeited his right to call in question.   These things
may serve to show that Cromwell's settlement, with all
its superficial practical advantages, had its practical dis-
advantages too.   It could not, in the nature of things, be
a permanent settlement at all.   It as it were put on in-

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[1] Waddington (*Congregational History*, ii. 536, 537) gives an instance from
Chard.
[2] For an example, see *Calendar of State Papers* (Domestic Series, 1658,
1659), p. 176.
[3] *Supra*, p. 398.
[4] See *Calendar of State Papers* (Domestic Series, 1658, 1659), pp. 194-196.

definitely minimising glasses in presence of difficulties, and then said that the difficulties were not there. The whole thing was nothing else than the confining within one vessel of various elements which refused to mix, and which must ultimately come out again as disparate as they went in.

But it is not with the success or non-success of Cromwell's system as a piece of working machinery that we are here most concerned. What we are here most concerned to note is the inconsistency of those Independents who accepted the office of parish minister, and the fact that by falling into that inconsistency they largely disqualified Independency as a witness-bearer to the Nonconformist spirit out of which it had been originally born. It has been more than once stated or suggested that the Independent ascendancy was in reality the Independent decline : and this, stated in anticipation, emerges as inference now that Cromwell's system has been passed under review. True, as has also been said, the Independent ascendancy was of a very different kind from the Presbyterian ascendancy which it supplanted, was used in larger charity, and sought to woo rather than to drive. Nevertheless, as to its spiritual mission, Independency went far to compromise itself by its participation in the order which Cromwell set up. To the extent of that participation, its witness to the Nonconformist ideal was silenced. Some there were who saw this. Milton's denunciation rang sharply against those who, calling themselves *Independents*, were nevertheless content to be *dependent* for their maintenance upon the State ;[1] and, if there be in this something in the nature of a play upon words, there is also far more. And indeed, having regard to all the points of Cromwell's system, it can hardly be questioned that the conforming Independents were in fault, and, though in all likelihood unconsciously, betrayers of the cause they professed to serve. It is probable that the point of State maintenance would count for little with some : we have seen that not all the Independents had as yet realised what in this respect their principles implied. But apart from that, there were considerations which should have given a convinced Independent

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[1] *Considerations touching the likeliest means to remove Hirelings out of the Church* (*Prose Works*, ed. Bohn, iii. 38).

pause. Such religious arrangements as were made were entirely under secular control. What had become of the doctrine that the Church was a believing body of men and women, in organic union with Jesus Christ the Head, and that anything in the nature of organisation must result from the operations of the inner life created by and through that relationship? The early Independents, we have seen, held the Nonconformist theory practically in its fulness, even though in their actual working of it out it may have suffered something of cramping and loss. But in Cromwell's scheme there was no provision for the creation of such a Church as the theory implies. Indeed, to say this is only to say that an impossible thing did not take place. Cromwell's scheme, in fact, provided for no Church at all in the strict sense of the word, but only for a number of preaching stations ; and any Independent who entered himself in the lists of its preachers *ipso facto* threw the real Independent theory overboard. The settlement shelved the idea of a Church so completely that any one who sheltered beneath it inevitably, by doing so, slighted the Church idea in his turn. It counts for little against all this that a separate " gathered " Church sometimes existed side by side with the parish congregation, and that the same Independent minister was sometimes in charge of both. By his association with the State scheme, he accepted and commended it, and confirmed it as being at any rate the main channel—whatever subsidiary channels there might be—through which religious life was to run. Moreover, the few details grouped around the central idea ran counter to the real Independent ideal. A conscientious Presbyterian might solace himself with the reflection that the Committee of " Triers " and the Committee for scandalous ministers bore a not very remote resemblance to bodies which his own system, were it once set up, would require : these Committees were certainly far more Presbyterian than Independent ; and as between the Conformist and Nonconformist ideas, it was towards the former, in Cromwell's plan, that the pendulum swayed most heavily. To all this so many of the Independents of the time were too sadly blind. They were caught, probably, in part, by the fact that entrance into the new Church involved no sacrifice of

individual opinion ; and they did not recognise that its very comprehensiveness told as much against their own concep- tions as the most strictly-regulated programme of doctrine and discipline could have done. We are here really upon a point which has been previously suggested—that because a struggle for liberty had to be waged in order that Independ- ency might exist, the idea of liberty unconsciously supplanted that of Independency in the minds of some, and the second came to be taken as including not much more than the first. Freedom, and a political system which bestowed freedom, almost appeared to embody the Independent ideal. Yet with religious arrangements under State control—with a loose agglomeration of human atoms, meeting in the parish Church once or twice a week, substituted for a real Church—and with the necessary minimum of ecclesiastical machinery of Presbyterian rather than Independent make —the Independents might well have hesitated before they yielded to the lure. But through the recent years they and their interest had become so intimately linked with general political interests that, when a religious and ecclesiastical settlement was made from the political standpoint—and made, moreover, by one of themselves—they did not consider and did not break away as, had they considered, they would surely have been compelled to do. Independ- ency in the person of Cromwell was at the Government's head : the acts and decisions of Cromwell were therefore Independency's own, and must be so received. Independ- ency as a religious idea could not detach itself from the general run of things which Independency in the person of Cromwell controlled, could not properly define its own position or estimate its own needs or hear its own inner voices—and so came the mist across its eyes, the wandering in mistaken ways. This was its heritage—this loss of a perfect sense of its own identity—its heritage from the years that had gone immediately before ; and by this did Independency impair its present testimony to the Nonconformist ideal, still further (as later history shows) impair its future testimony to the same, and bring upon itself many a trouble both from within and without.

The system with which Independency was thus too

ready to identify itself barely survived its founder's death. Cromwell finished his course on 3rd September, 1658, and from that moment the end was sure. It is not necessary to enumerate in detail the various occurrences between the accession of Richard Cromwell to the Protector's chair and the restoration of Charles the Second ; for, taken altogether, they make but an episode, corresponding, it might be said, to those moments during which one picture dissolves into another upon the screen. It is to be remembered that Cromwell's rule had been really the rule of the sword : there is no reason to suppose that the masses of the nation, however much they have disliked excesses of tyranny on the part of monarchy and Church, were against either monarchy or Church at heart : through recent years no reliable expression of the national voice had emerged ; and when, as in the Parliament of 1654, something like such an expression had been secured, its note had not been one of special favour towards Cromwell himself.[1] What did actually happen in the end makes it probable that if at any time after the execution of Charles the First a plebiscite had been taken, with all fear of Cromwell's displeasure lifted away, the throne would have been once more set up. Or, if it be too much to say that immediately after the death of Charles this would have been the result of a reference to the national will, it is certain that as change succeeded change, and still there came no settled peace, there was a steadily-increasing desire for a return to the earlier ways. It is very significant that among those who were most clamorous for the return of the second Charles, not the least clamorous was Prynne who, as he himself remarked, had little save the loss of his ears for which to thank the first.[2] Only Cromwell's dominant personality had kept the fever suppressed ; and only another personality strong and dominant as Cromwell's own (if even that) could, after Cromwell was gone, have preserved the semblance of peace. No such

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[1] " Few Parliaments have ever been more memorable, or more truly representative of the English people, than the Parliament of 1654." (J. R. Green, *History of the English People*, iii. 285.) The statement is over-strong ; but certainly this Parliament came nearest of all Cromwell's Assemblies to being a real expression of the national mind.

[2] *Supra*, p. 289.

successor arose. So great was Richard Cromwell's weakness that even as he stepped to the Protector's place, the shadow of the second Charles, with its owner not far behind it, began to move towards the throne.

Events made quick work. The recapitulation of them is not much more than the mention of a series of quarrels— one strong man, General Monck, rising up presently in the midst of the tumult to say that the quarrels must cease. No sooner was Richard settled in his seat than the Army, which could not feel itself bound to Richard by any such ties as those that bound it to the man who had led it to victory time upon time, showed jealousy and distrust, embroiled itself with the new Protector and his Parliament, and demanded, to the Parliament's disgust, that its share in the government should be enlarged.[1] Indeed, now that the great Protector was gone, the Army cared for no Protector at all, disliked the idea of any single man at the head of affairs, and made practically common cause with those Republicans who, like Sir Harry Vane, had even through Oliver Cromwell's time been inwardly chafing though outwardly compelled to submit. In the general sentiment of the Independents (for Richard was suspected of Presbyterian and even of Royalist leanings) the sentiment of the Army found a not inconsiderable ally, since Richard's character gave no guarantee for the continued existence of that settlement by which the Independents had consented to profit, and which, of course, they desired to preserve.[2] This first quarrel—that between the Army and the Protector—ended, after various vacillations on Richard's part, in Richard's acquiescence in the Army's demands, in the dissolving of Parliament, and in the abdication of Richard himself—he being already weary of trying to carry a load he had no strength to bear, and unable to call up any "heart's reserves" wherewith to " fight the battle through." Richard Cromwell is in fact one of the most pitiably ignoble figures in English history—a man who was thrilled by no emotion other than that of cowardice, no impulse except the impulse to hide, when the first mutterings of crisis arose. His retirement

1 Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), iv. 341 ff.
2 Dale, *History of English Congregationalism*, p. 347.

necessarily brought back the condition of things which had
obtained from 1649 to 1653, and Republicanism, for the
second time, came in.   The triumphant Army, for its next
step — needing something in the way of constitutional
backing if it were to commend itself to the nation—
summoned the members of the expelled Rump to return to
Westminster,[1] perhaps thinking that the lassitude which
these men had shown before [2] would once again cause it to
sit still while the Council of the Army, in real though not
nominal supremacy, worked out its will.   But between the
Rump and the Army the same quarrel broke out as that
which had exploded between the Army and Richard
Cromwell : the Parliament, having been recalled, was not
content to be merely a chorus for the singing of the Army's
praise and for repeating in unison the Army's decrees ; and
in October the Army, finding the Parliament profitless,
followed Oliver Cromwell's example and drove it out.[3]
This second quarrel, therefore, ended in military supremacy
once again.   But it happened that General Monck, the
commander of the soldiers in Edinburgh, was, notwithstand-
ing his own position, a favourer of constitutional rule, and
now, intervening, declared that he would march southwards
and restore Parliament to its place.   Southwards accordingly
he marched ; and though the threat of his coming induced
the Army to reinstate the Rump, Monck, who was evidently
convinced that it was his business to avert the threatened
chaos, and who was, as has been said, the strong man of the
piece, pressed on.   There have been, both at the time and
since, various readings of Monck's intentions and motives :
he has been accused of having been all the time in the pay
of Charles and, accordingly, of having sworn falsely to the
Parliament and to the Republican cause ; but the most
likely reading of the matter is that his one purpose was to
have things brought to a stable settlement, and that when he
came south he had no definite idea as to what that stable
settlement was to be, or how it was to be won.   " The most
sober judgment," wrote a contemporary, " is that he enter-
tains fortune by the day, not absolutely determining in his

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[1] Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), iv. 344.
[2] *Supra*, pp. 351 ff.   [3] Whitelock, as former note, iv. 364, 365.

own mind what he will say or do on his arrival";[1] and if one takes this verdict in a limited sense, as bearing only upon Monck's *methods*, while remembering that his ultimate aim, though a general one, was fixed, it may probably be accepted as correct. And now it was that the mind of the country at large was beginning to be revealed; and now it was, also, that the Independents—who had first of all supported the Army against Richard, and then the Rump against the Army—must have begun to realise what a storm they had helped to set loose from the cavern where it had lurked.[2] A royalist sentiment had shown itself from the very beginning of the unsettlement; and now petitions began to pour in demanding the calling of a new Parliament which should soberly, seriously, and finally take affairs in hand, and, as a preliminary to this, the making up of the existing Parliament's numbers by the re-admission of those who had suffered under "Pride's Purge."[3] This would be to give to the Parliament its older Presbyterian hue; and, as Presbyterians and Royalists had at the close of Charles the First's life made up their former controversy, there was not much doubt what the issue would be.

Once arrived at the centre of activity, Monck had not much difficulty in making up his mind. The calling of a new and really representative Parliament was, he saw, the one inevitable thing. The recall of the expelled members he had no liking for, if only, without that, the Rump could be induced to take the necessary measures for the summoning of a fresh House. But these measures the Rump refused to take : it clung as tenaciously to life as it had done during the period when it moved Cromwell's wrath ; so that another quarrel now perforce supervened between Monck and the Parliamentary fragment which had hailed him as its saviour a little time before. In the end, Monck took the course he had shrunk from, the expelled members being called back in February of 1660.[4] At once the renovated Parliament set

[1] Quoted by Professor Firth, *Cambridge Modern History*, iv. 549, 550.
[2] Whitelock (*Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.*, ed. 1853, iv. 357) says that the Congregationalists offered at this juncture to raise three regiments in support of the Parliament.
[3] Numerous allusions to these petitions can be seen in Whitelock.
[4] Whitelock, *Memorials of The English Affairs, etc.* (ed. 1853), iv. 398.

itself to its task.   It was now, of course, Presbyterian ; and
so the Independent ascendancy, which had been trembling in
the balance since the unrest began, collapsed.   A re-estab-
lishment of Presbyterianism was at once voted, with all its
necessary concomitants—the acceptance of the Westminster
Confession, the Solemn League and Covenant, and the rest ; [1]
and although this second establishment of Presbyterianism
had even less practical effect, taking the country as a whole,
than had the first, it brought about the removal of some
Independents from prominent place, such as Thomas Goodwin
and John Owen from the posts they held at Oxford.[2]   There
is no reason to suppose that if the ultimate settlement had
remained as the enlarged Rump planned it, Independency
would have fared much better than it actually did : the
Presbyterianism of 1660 was not essentially different, so far
as toleration is concerned, from the Presbyterianism of 1646 ;
and what really happened was that the doom which might
have fallen upon Independency alone from Presbyterianism's
hand fell from a third hand upon Independency and Presby-
terianism alike.   But this is by the way.   The normal
possibilities and probabilities of any of the intermediate
situations between the death of Oliver Cromwell and the
accession of Charles do not matter.   They were lost in the
great rush of the forces which, arising out of the first, swept on
to the second as to the inevitable end.   The definite assertion
of Presbyterianism was probably made because suspicion of
what Charles might do was not altogether dead, and the nine
points of the law which possession would give had better be
secured before the King came back.   Doubtless it was taken
for granted, having regard to Charles's religious antecedents
and known preferences, that the re-established Presbyterianism
would be modified ; but doubtless it was also taken for
granted that the re-establishment would prevent the modifi-
cations from being too severe, and would certainly save
Presbyterianism from being utterly ground down beneath
Episcopacy's heel.   Then—although right up to the end the
Parliament showed reluctance to get off the stage—came the

[1] Neal, *History of The Puritans*, iv. 204, 205.
[2] Dale, *History of English Congregationalism*, p. 350 ; Whitelock, as former
note, iv. 403.

dissolution and the elections, then in April the meeting of a Parliament in which royalist feeling was supreme, and then the King's formal recall. At the end, the Independents made some feeble effort to keep a footing on the edge of the perilous crumbling cliff—even talked of raising an army to dispute the whole question of settlement again [1]—but the time had passed. And for that matter, if promises could have laid the fears of Presbyterians and Independents to rest, it was with promises upon his lips that Charles returned. "We do declare a liberty to tender consciences," he said in the "Declaration of Breda," "and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question, for differences of opinion in matters of religion which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom." [2] Whether, as has been generally supposed, Charles never meant to keep his promise, or whether, as some maintain, he really intended (though chiefly with an eye to Roman Catholic interests) an indulgence in which all should share, and found circumstances too strong for him,[3] need not concern us here. A study of later facts may help us to a decision on the point, if a decision be desired. How the promise was actually kept—how it was not kept—every one knows. On Presbyterianism and Independency in common, Charles's landing at Dover meant the descending of the night. What had been inevitable from the moment of Cromwell's death had come to pass : the Presbyterian ascendancy and the Independent ascendancy had had their day and had ceased to be ; and the wheel, having come full circle, was exactly in its old position once more.

Looking back, from the point we have reached, to the point at which we took our former summary survey of the fortunes of the Nonconformist spirit, and then bringing the glance back along the line again, the observer cannot but see that the Nonconformist spirit, in its endeavours to obtain a foothold through these years, had achieved but a very partial success. A few sentences of recapitulation will suffice. At the beginning of the Elizabethan period, the

[1] Neal, *History of The Puritans*, iv. 220.
[2] Whitelock, as former note, iv. 410.
[3] Bate, *The Declaration of Indulgence, 1672*, ix. 76, 128, etc.

call for the Nonconformist spirit was loud ; for in religion
organisation (and organisation under purely secular control)
was supreme.   And the difficulties in the way of the
Nonconformist spirit were at their height ; for the Reforma-
tion settlement itself, inasmuch as its contributions to the
religious life of England had been in themselves such as the
Nonconformist spirit, though from other than the actually
operating motives, would have made, seemed to render the
Nonconformist spirit, when it asked that the good should
give place to the still better, something of an intrusion to be
warned away.   Nevertheless, the Nonconformist ideal had
sent its witnesses forth—only their witness had been too
falteringly borne, and their trumpet had given too uncertain
a sound, and in the end they failed to prophesy the thing
for which they had been sent.   Puritanism within the
Church of England was not much more than the instinctive
movement of men who did not comprehend the spirit which
sought to claim and spur them.   Puritanism, as a conse-
quence, failed to realise the requirements of the situation :
in the persons of its clergy it gave up the struggle and
passed to the New World ; while in the persons of its laity
it became secularised, and having become secularised, allied
itself with a Presbyterianism which had no affinity with the
Nonconformist spirit at all.   Independency realised and
contended for the Nonconformist theory ; but, while declar-
ing that organisation must be made by life, went on to
define beforehand the organisation in which life must result,
became merely imitative of New Testament models, and so
did not throw itself upon and into the mystical process
whereby alone the Nonconformist theory can be obeyed and
fulfilled.   Hence came its ultimate loosening of its hold
upon the fundamental and central idea which at first it had
grasped so well—its readiness (when a struggle for liberty
and toleration was found to be necessary if its true spiritual
testimony was to be borne) to put the question of liberty
and toleration, a side-issue after all, though an important
one, into the place of utmost honour—its self-identifica-
tion with a governmental and political system which so
promisingly made liberty and toleration planks in its pro-
gramme—its inability to detach itself, in the consummation

of that governmental and political system, from merely governmental and political considerations, and realise its own spiritual identity again—its consequent trailing of the Nonconformist banner, as if half forgetful that it bore it, in the dust. And Quakerism, starting indeed with the mystical experience which Independency so feebly cultivated, and to that extent being, indeed, a true exponent of the Nonconformist idea, forgot to let the inner life work itself out into a visible body, held the Church idea too lightly, became too negative and protesting, and so brought itself and its ideals into trouble which, under a realisation of the *whole* Nonconformist conception, would have been easily kept at bay. Truly, the Nonconformist spirit had been but poorly served. The earthen vessel into which it had poured itself had impaired the treasure, and had afterwards given only an inferior admixture forth. All these things we have seen. So far as the past is concerned, this is the sum of it all.

But the future was still to be faced. That way we shall subsequently have to look. Only this can (and must) already be said—that those representatives of the Non-conformist spirit and ideal who remained upon the scene were, precisely because they had thus suffered declension, less fully equipped for whatever emergencies they had now to meet; for they who make mistakes usually, by the very making of them, squander some of the strength and quality needful to bear and overcome the consequences of the mistakes themselves, mistakes thus producing an inner condition out of which further mistakes are born ; and the student of what happened after the Restoration will often find that the reasons, both for the assaults made upon Nonconformity and for Nonconformity's inability to offer · more effectual resistance to them, lay in what had happened before. The Nonconformist spirit, as it looked back from 1660, could scarcely do otherwise than wish wistfully that those whom it had sent had made a nobler appearance upon the field. There had been no repetition of Wiclif's great day, no echo of Wiclif's great call. And, since it could only thus look back with vain and wistful longing, it could only look forward with not much more than trembling and

wistful hope.   As yet, at any rate, there was no sign that a day like Wiclif's would dawn again, or a voice like Wiclif's be raised.

The journey into that future, then hidden, it is our next task to take.

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